AN

ESSAY

ON

VIRTUE.

Lately publiſhed,

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AN
ESSAY
ON THE
NATURE and OBLIGATIONS
OF
VIRTUE.

BY
T. RUTHERFORTH, B.D.
Fellow of St. JOHN's College in *Cambridge*,
and of the ROYAL SOCIETY.

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TO

ANTHONY THOMAS ABDY, Esq.

OF LINCOLN's INN.

DEAR SIR,

THERE is very little in the following sheets, which you have not heard me explain, upon different occasions, whilst you were under my care in the University. But your partiality to the

the author will, I am ſure, engage you to read them over; though you ſhould meet with nothing new in them to entertain you: and I promiſe myſelf from your conſtant attendance upon ſuch inſtructions, as were thought proper for you, when you were here, that you will have ſome pleaſure in recollecting them now you have left us.

You are indeed entered upon another courſe of ſtudy; and I am glad to hear that you are as diligent in purſuing it, as I know you were in preparing for it: yet I hope you continue to think yourſelf much intereſted in the ſubject of the book, which I now put into your hands. My deſign in writing it was, to forward the more general reception of a religion, for which I know you to have a hearty regard; and to ſhew the reaſonableneſs of a practice, which I found you engaged in very early. And I am perſuaded that your cloſe application to the ſtudy of the law

law will not ſo wholly employ your thoughts, as to leave you no leiſure for confirming yourſelf in the principles of Chriſtianity; and that none of thoſe pleaſures, which at your time of life are often fatal, will any ways weaken your love of virtue or call you off from the practice of it.

I depend upon your excuſe for writing in the ſame manner as if I was ſtill your tutor. Your temper and the exactneſs of your behaviour prevented you from ever ſeeing that character in a diſagreeable light: and, as my regard for your welfare began from the duty of my former office, ſomething of the ſame duty will always mix itſelf with my affection, and will make me think that I have a privilege of adviſing you with leſs reſerve, than is commonly made uſe of in other ſorts of friendſhip. The moſt proper advice for me to give, as well as the moſt important for you to follow, is,

what

what the book itſelf was intended to enforce, that you ſhould continue ſincere in the religion of Chriſt, as the only ſure way to make you virtuous, and to make you happy.

I am

Your faithful

and very affectionate

friend and ſervant

CAMBRIDGE,
St. John's, Jan. 2.

T. RUTHERFORTH.

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AN

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VIRTUE.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.

I Always thought, that *Virtue*, which we expect all mankind should practise, must be something, which all mankind either are or easily may be acquainted with: for though it is not to be imagined, that the vulgar and illiterate should be able to explain what they mean, though none but men of skill and science can give definitions of words and put their thoughts into such language as to make them intelligible to others; yet certainly common sense joined to the most ordinary helps of instruction must afford a more obvious notion of virtue than any that is to be met

 with

with in the writings of the moralists: or else I know not how we can take it ill or reasonably complain, that so few are virtuous; when from the accounts, which learned men have given us of it, so few can know what virtue is.

The cause of moral obligation or the true reason for being virtuous should be as level to every man's capacity as the notion of virtue; unless we would excuse vice in men of low or unimproved parts, and would think them at liberty to behave as they please: for how unreasonable is it to look upon any sort of behaviour as a man's duty, when the reasons, why it is so, are such as he can neither make out by himself, nor comprehend, when others explain them to him?

Upon these accounts it appeared to me, that after the labour of so many learned men, who have wrote about morality, there was still something to be done by those, that come after them, and that it would be no unprofitable nor unpleasing search to trace out the notion of virtue from the common opinions and sense of mankind, and to ascertain the reasons for practising it by shewing that we cannot otherwise obtain that end, which both nature and reason teach us to pursue.

I was the more pleased with this enquiry, because I found it would lead us to understand the wisdom and goodness of God in making positive revelations of his will to mankind, and would teach

us

us to think more humbly of ourselves and more highly of his dispensations than some of us are wont to think: as it will shew us, that we stand in need of his assistance both to instruct us how to be happy and to oblige us to be virtuous, and that in every revelation, which he has made of his will, a particular regard has been had to the supply of these wants.

In these enquiries I shall endeavour to avoid as much as possible all abstracted reasonings: and, if ever I am betrayed into them, I hope the reader will see, that it is by the necessity of examining what others have wrote and not by my own inclination: I had rather instruct him, if it was in my power, than amuse and perplex him: and matters of fact, which he meets with every day in common life, will be more intelligible than refined disputation; and an appeal to the general sense and judgment of mankind will be more convincing than the subtilty of metaphysics.

I am very sensible, that the plan of this work cannot be well executed by one, whose way of life has introduced him to so little acquaintance with the world and knowledge of mankind as mine has done: and since I disagree from so many writers of the highest reputation, I have more reason to be afraid of having my faults exposed and my opinions confuted, than to hope, that any body of a more extensive experience and of bet-

ter abilities than myself will undertake to write upon the same plan and make good what is wanting in the following performance. But be this as it will: I shall endeavour to bespeak the reader's candour by treating those I differ from in the same manner that I would wish to be treated myself; and then what I have to advance I shall trust with him; and by his judgment let it stand or fall: I shall propose my opinions as clearly as I can, and shall say at once all that I design to say in the support and defence of them, for I have neither leisure nor inclination to engage in a controversy.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

An enquiry into the notion of vir

IF mankind had agreed upon an exact catalogue of virtuous actions, there might have been a ready way of finding out the meaning of the word *virtue* and of determining what standard our behaviour is refer'd to, when some parts of it are called virtuous, others vicious, and a third sort indifferent. By looking over the list of virtues we should certainly have discovered some leading property, peculiar to the actions, that had a place there, by which they were distinguishable from all others; those, that had the opposite property, we might have been sure were vicious; and such as we found had neither of them we might have reckoned indifferent.

But a strange disagreement and variety of opinion, in distributing our actions under these three general heads has made this method of enquiry wholly impracticable; for how can we hope to find a true and steady characteristic of virtuous behaviour by knowing what actions have been called so? when the very same that in one age or country have been counted virtues or at least not vices, have been detested in another as vicious and abominable: nay, when in the same age and

country

country this very point is so wholly unsettled, that after one set of moralists has with great pains and much reasoning placed some parts of our conduct in the catalogue of virtues, another set is immediately ready to strike them out again.

Though, if we attend to these disputes, which have been one means of obstructing the most natural way of finding out what virtue consists in; if we consider where they have arisen, how they have been carried on, and in what instances all parties are agreed; as sure a way may be opened, as the other would have been, though a less direct and less obvious one: and I believe it may be proved from hence, that *Virtue is that quality in our actions, by which they are fitted to do good to others or to prevent their harm:* for this we shall find is the test, to which all parties refer themselves in the question concerning some parts of our behaviour, whether they are to be called virtues or not; it accounts for this question having arisen concerning some parts of our behaviour only, whilst others have been constantly allowed by all mankind to be virtues; and all parties are agreed to call the same sort of behaviour sometimes a virtue and sometimes a vice as it comes up to this standard or falls short of it.

This is the method in which I would chuse to carry on the following enquiry: but the affected obscurity, with which this subject has been treated,

treated, has taught the world, that nothing can be right here, if it is not abstruse and unintelligible: men's heads have been filled with dark notions and their understandings have been amused with hard words, till they only, who write about morality so abstractedly as to prevent the rest of mankind from knowing any thing of the matter, are allowed to understand it. And as the prejudices, which have been raised in this manner against whatever is plain and natural, cannot be removed without stopping nor be avoided without going a little out of the way, this must be my excuse to the reader, wherever he finds, that the method here proposed is not closely pursued.

What are called the duties, that a man owes to himself, have had the most controverted claim to the title of virtues: for, whilst justice and benevolence are on all hands allowed to come fully up to this character, scruples have been sometimes raised about chastity and sobriety. Indeed all the branches of chastity have not fared alike in this respect; for some of them, besides the duty, which a man owes to himself, necessarily include that, which he owes to others, and are so evidently nothing else but parts of justice, that it would be absurd to allow this latter to be a virtue and yet deny at the same time that they are so. But then there are other instances of chastity, where the connection with the duties, that we owe to our fellow-

fellow-creatures is less apparent, and these are sometimes represented as not capable of being brought under the notion of virtues, and are said to be recommended and enforced either by prudential motives only, or by the positive command and authority of God. The men, who are of this opinion, are such as affect to be libertines upon principle, and have set themselves free from the restraints of religion: or they are such as would willingly indulge their inclinations, and are persuaded that they shall more easily be excused for violating a duty, which is of positive injunction only, than they should be, if they were to neglect what is a virtue and naturally good in itself: or lastly they are such as endeavour to do honour to Christianity by making it what they think a religion of greater purity than the religion of nature. The rest of mankind, if their manners have been civilized and their understandings improved, engage on the other side of the question, and are ready to maintain, that whatever is called chastity is to be esteemed a virtue. The arguments, which one party chiefly insists upon, and which the other seems to take the most notice of, make it plainly appear, what notion of virtue both of them have.

The patrons of chastity generally support their cause by shewing, that the sensualist is either hurtful to his fellow-creatures or at best less useful

to them than he might have been. They tell us, that he throws away his time in the pursuit of pleasure; that, when he should be doing good, he has such engagements upon his hands, as leave him but little leisure to attend to the happiness of others; that, if his favourite gratifications are not enough to take up his whole thoughts and stifle all his regards for every thing else, yet they will be sure to prevent him from doing the service to mankind, which, if he had kept his attention and his affections disengaged, he might have done: that, when the indulging himself in those gratifications is at last become habitual, and they are made most necessary to him, they dissipate all the faculties of his mind, and do not barely put it out of his power to do any good at all, but make him besides noxious and hurtful: though he should have something of tenderness and affection for his fellow-creatures left, yet it would appear in those instances only where their happiness did not interfere with his desires; for if ever it should, he is so eager to obtain his ends, that no sentiments of humanity nor even of common justice could stop him in his course: fathers, husbands, and whole families must be made wretched, if his enjoyments require it: and even his own children, besides the misery of a weak and distempered constitution, which his debaucheries will entail upon them, would see their fortunes squandered away and their

educations neglected, and would have their principles corrupted by his example, till they were brought at last into the same condition with himself.

It may fairly be presumed that neither they, who would entirely get rid of what they call the unnatural restraints of religion, nor they, who only endeavour to weaken them, can be hardy enough to deny any branch of chastity to be a virtue till they have attempted to shew, that the neglect of it is not attended with these inconveniences: and amongst those, who through a mistak zeal for Christianity, have thrown some of duties out of the catalogue of virtues, and ha supposed them not to be of natural obligati one very learned writer, that may well be thought to speak the sentiments of the rest, has described the natural honesty or virtue of an acti so as to make it at least in part consist in its agreeableness to a social nature, that is, in its fitness to advance and secure the common happiness of mankind. And thus all parties seem agreed to rest the cause upon this issue and shew us, that their notion of virtue is that, which was just now proposed.

Grot. de jur. bell. et pac. l. 2. c. 20. s. xii.

Here it may not be improper to stop a little, and enquire, not whether chastity be a virtue or no,

[a] Jus naturale est dictatum rectae rationis indicans actui alicui, ex ejus convenientia aut disconvenientia cum natura rationali ac sociali, inesse moralem turpitudinem aut necessitatem moralem ac consequenter ab auctore naturae Deo talem actum vetari aut praecipi. Grot.

but whether they, who agree that it is, can have any other notion of virtue besides this. Most of them perhaps, if they were examined upon this head, would say they had another very different from it: and it may seem a strange undertaking to convince a man, that his opinion in any case is not what he takes it to be: such an undertaking, it must be confessed, cannot possibly succeed, unless where we are able to make it appear, that the man's way of thinking and speaking in other instances is quite inconsistent with what he supposes to be his opinion in the case proposed; and where by an appeal to those other instances he can be made to attend in this to his own opinion, which nothing but the want of attention could have made him mistake at first.

Let us therefore examine, what it is we dislike in the man of pleasure; and then we shall easily judge what it is we approve or give the name of virtue to in the opposite character. Is he disliked merely because he hurts himself by spoiling his constitution and by wasting his fortune? — but a man may be vicious enough in this respect to be very contemptible, though he neither impairs his health so much as the sedentary student is supposed

Hutcheson's inq. pag. 104.

Ramazzini de literat. morb. diss. +.

Grot. de jur. bell. et pac. l. 1. c. 1. s. x. For the reason of adding the word Sociali to this definition, see Barbeyrac's note on the place. As far as any being is of a social nature it regards not only its own interests but those of its species. see Grot. Prolegom. 6. 7. 8. 9.

Chauncey's Antiquit. of Hertfordshire. p. 5

to do, nor injures his fortune so much as a projector, who wants proper encouragement to carry on such schemes as are of real benefit to the public: and yet if the two characters of the diseased student and the decayed projector were both to meet in the same person, he would be far from contempt or dislike; most people would be prejudiced in favour of him; they would pity the weakness of human nature and reproach the public for its ingratitude.

Is the disregard, which the sensualist meets with owing to any disagreement between his behaviour and the relations or fitnesses of things?—if the reader will excuse a little obscurity in what cannot be made very intelligible, I will endeavour to examine this question particularly. Is it the natural fitness, which any thing has to be applied to a certain purpose or to be used in a certain manner, that makes such actions be esteemed virtuous as apply it to this purpose or use it in this manner, and such vicious as make a contrary use or application of it? or does the virtue of an action consist in the fitness or agreement between the action and the character of him, who does it, and its vice in the disagreement or unsuitableness of them to each other? the former of these I will beg leave to call *fitness or unfitness of application*; the latter *fitness or unfitness of action*. Some, who have wrote upon this subject, seem to take both of these into the account;

account; tho' it is impossible that either of them should give us any *distinct* notion of virtue, if any at all.

Fitness of application only is what the ingenious author of the *Religion of nature delineated* calls acting agreeably to truth or treating things as being what they are; and this he makes the measure of virtue and vice. But one of the objections proposed by himself against his own opinion demonstrates the great uncertainty of this measure; and the answer, that he gives to it, will point out another notion of virtue, which cannot but be clearer and more distinct, because it is the true one. For if virtue consists in the fitness of application and vice in the contrary; why is not it a virtue to drink out of a glass, a vice to break it? why is not it a virtue to pull at the longer arm of a lever in order to raise a weight, a vice to pull at the shorter? is it because this sort of fitness does not make an action virtuous nor this sort of unfitness make it vicious in all cases, but in some only? here then, unless we call in something else to our assistance, we shall be left in great doubt and confusion, unable to distinguish virtuous or vicious actions from those, which are indifferent; since we should want a mark whereby we might separate these privileged relations, the neglect of which will immediately make our behaviour be disliked and censured, from those others, which may safely be

Wollaston. Sect. I.

Ibid. prop. XI. obj. 5

be violated, without so much as giving offence to any one. But, says this author, "two things "ought here to be regarded. 1. That, tho' to act "against truth in any case is wrong, yet the de-"grees of guilt varying with the importance of "things, in some cases the importance one way "or t'other may be so little as to render the crime "*evanescent* or *almost* nothing. And, 2. that in-"animate beings cannot be considered as capable "of wrong treatment, if the respect they bear to "living beings is separated from them. The drink-"ing-glass before mentioned could not be con-"sidered as such, or be what it *now* is, if there "was no drinking animal to own and use it. No-"thing can be of importance to that thing itself, "which is void of all life and perception. So that "when we compute what such things are, we "must take them as being what they are *in refe-"rence* to things, that have life."

But the respect, which any thing has to living beings differs nothing from the respect it has to inanimate ones; except as far as the former are capable of happiness or misery, the latter incapable of either: and therefore what makes any unfitness of application be vicious is, that it produces misery; what makes any fitness of application be virtuous is that it produces happiness: and as the crime, so the virtue will be evanescent or almost nothing, when the importance of the fitness or un-

unfitneſs as to happineſs or miſery is ſo. Thus his own objection would have led him right at laſt, and would, if purſued, have taught him to fix the *notion of an action's virtue*, where it it ought to be fixed, in *its naturally producing good or preventing harm.* I would here remind the reader, that in this account of a virtuous action, I mean, that it is called ſo, not becauſe it makes him happy who does it, or prevents his miſery; but becauſe others in proper circumſtances will feel one of theſe effects, from it. For I have endeavoured to ſhew in the beginning of this chapter and ſhall have frequent opportunities of ſhewing in other parts of this work, that the effect, which any action has or may have upon the happineſs or miſery of the agent himſelf, is not what gives the name of a virtue or a vice to it. pag. 11.

If what has been hitherto advanced proves any thing, the notion of virtue muſt in every branch of duty be ſomething elſe beſides fitneſs of application: but in the duties, which a man owes to himſelf, it may be ſhewn diſtinctly. For here fitneſs of application is nothing elſe but fitneſs of action; becauſe a man muſt neceſſarily act agreeably to his character, when he uſes himſelf in a proper manner; and nothing in theſe inſtances can make an unfitneſs of application but a diſagreement between the action and the nature, character or circumſtances of him, who does it. Unleſs there-

therefore the notion of virtue may be had from fitness of action, the self-duties cannot be ever called virtues by those, who pretend to have no notion of it but that it is a conformity to the relations of things. But do we disapprove the behaviour of the sensualist, because it is contrary to the character of a man? — who then shall determine what the true character of a man is, or whence shall the standard be taken? if from the sensualist himself; then he plainly acts up to it: if from the generality of mankind; perhaps it would be found that fact and experience do not put an aversion to the pleasures of sense into the notion of a man; and I do not remember to have seen it in any of the laboured and abstract definitions of our species.

The other notions of virtue, which have been advanced by different moralists, shall be examined presently: let us now return to the question we set out with; — What is it, that is disliked in the man of pleasure? — is not it, that his course of life is such as calls off his attention from the welfare of his fellow-creatures, makes him negligent of doing good, and disposes him to do harm? for we begin to dislike him, when he first discovers his inclinations; every act of unchastity makes us suspect that he is more ready to please himself than to do good to others: but a single violation of chastity is not thought a sufficient reason for

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calling him vicious; he is not contemptible, till he is habitually debauched, that is, till he has in some measure devoted himself to such follies as make him an useless member of society. And if at any time his ill-governed passions engage him not only to be careless about the welfare of mankind, but to disturb their peace and break in upon their happiness; then we something more than despise, we hate him. Since therefore the dislike, which attends him, keeps pace with his neglect to do good and his inclination to do harm; it seems to be a just conclusion, that this is the true reason for disapproving his conduct.

Some of the same observations, that have been made above, are applicable in the case of sobriety. For how must it be made out that this is a virtue? do the good effects, which the temperate man will commonly experience, and the pernicious consequences of the opposite vice upon the intemperate give it this name?—The worst consequences, which the drunkard feels in the present world, are, that he shortens his life, and makes it miserable whilst it lasts. And if this made his behaviour be called vicious; then the mechanic, that has impaired his health and broke his constitution in a useful trade; and the young hero, that sheds his blood in the just defence of his country, must be vicious too. The difference between these characters is what I have made the difference between virtue and

Ramazzini de morb. artific

vice. The mechanic facrifices his health and the foldier his life to the good of mankind. Whilft the drunkard for a great part of his time deprives himfelf abfolutely of the ufe of his reafon, throws off all reftraints and all fenfe of duty, and makes himfelf dangerous and hurtful. Or if his fellow-creatures fhould efcape his mad fallies; yet at beft neither they, whom the common ties of humanity have recommended to his care, nor thofe, whom the clofer ties of blood have united to him, can hope for any good from him. All, that have embarked in any concerns with him, will commonly feel the effects of his debaucheries in their fortune: his family will be fure to feel them both in their fortune and in their conftitution. If he is of a nice and delicate frame, this courfe of life will foon weaken him, and at laft wear him out: it will make him indolent and unactive, peevifh and uneafy with all about him: it will cloud his underftanding, ftupify his judgment, and leave him neither the inclination nor the abilities to do good. But if his conftitution is a little ftronger, and is able to hold out againft the frequent attacks, which his folly makes upon it; then the fame exceffes will give him an inclination to do harm: for, before they have brought him into the defpicable condition juft defcribed, they will not barely make him morofe, but put fuch a fiercenefs and violence into his temper, that fome will avoid him,

him, because they dislike him, and others, because they are afraid of him. And if the wearing out a life, which might have been serviceable to mankind, in doing no good and in exposing themselves to the hazard of doing much harm is what we disapprove in the debauched and intemperate; it will be easy to infer, that the contrary to all this recommends sobriety, and is the true cause why we call and esteem it a virtue.

I know that sobriety is agreable to the will of God, and that the neglect of it will be punished in another life: but if this be the notion of virtue, then the antient moralists could have no notion of it, and had no meaning for a word, which they use very frequently, and to all appearance as steadily and with as much propriety as we do: for it is not usual with them to place the nature of virtue in a conformity to the will of the Gods; and much less do they place it in being careful to avoid such punishments as shall be inflicted in a life after this. Nay so far are they from making the essence of virtue consist in any consideration of another life, that few of them and these very seldom mention it even as a sanction of virtue: and when they do, it is in such a manner and upon such occasions, that there may be reason for believing them to speak at these times in the character of orators rather than of philosophers.

This single consideration, that sobriety is commanded and enforced by God, is sufficient to make a duty of it: but, though it must be allowed, that every virtue is a duty, yet it does not follow, that every duty is a virtue: for then what foundation would there be for the distinction, which most men allow of, between moral and positive duties? Some indeed do maintain, that there is not any foundation for such a distinction: but the manner, in which they endeavour to support their opinion, either shews them to have the same notion of virtue, that I would establish; or else will leave us in possession of this distinction as far as I should have occasion to make any use of it. If they attempt to prove, that one sort of duties will by positive institution tend as much to promote and secure the happiness of mankind as the other does naturally; and therefore that upon the whole there is no difference between them: this may be true, but supposes the moral goodness or virtue of actions to consist in their tendency to do good or to prevent harm. But if they only think of proving, that there is the same reason for complying with both, because the obligation to practise either one or the other sort is ultimately derived from the will of God: this I would grant too; but it will only shew that both of them are equally duties, and not that the moral nature of one is the same with the positive nature of the other, or that the name

virtue

virtue may be applyed with equal propriety to either; which it certainly might be, if conformity to the will of God was the standard of virtue, or if whatever is a duty must for that reason be a virtue too.

It is not foreign to the present design nor improper in this place to observe, that though the division of duties into those, which we owe to God; those, which we owe to our neighbour; and those, which we owe to ourselves; be very right and proper; yet such a division of virtues was scarce ever heard of. Or if any one thinks otherwise, and is not aware, that it would be an unusual way of speaking to talk of the virtues, that we owe or that relate to God: he may find reason for changing his opinion, when he recollects, that we commonly distinguish between piety and virtue; and that the duties we owe to God are generally proved to be virtues by the Apostle's inference, that *he, who loveth God, will love his brother also.* 1 Joh. c.IV. v.20.21.

It would be nothing to the purpose to urge that a certain innate moral sense, which approves virtue and disapproves vice, shews us the beauty of temperance and informs us, that it is of the former sort. For if it were ever so true, that we brought such a natural taste for virtue into the world with us, yet this would not in the least affect the case in hand; as it can teach us at best only what does

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approve and not what is approved. When I ask what virtue is, what quality in our actions this name belongs to? I should receive but little instruction by being told; that virtue is perceived by a faculty in the mind, which differs from the understanding and which may very well be called an internal sense. Unless indeed they, who give this answer, mean that the notion of virtue is nothing else but the agreement between an action and this sense; that, as the idea of sound is nothing but the perception, which is conveyed to the mind by the ears, so the idea of virtue is nothing but the approbation, which the mind perceives to be given by this internal sense to some sort of actions. But if this was the case, if the idea of virtue was the object of a sense peculiarly adapted to it, and was nothing but that perception in the mind, which this sense conveys thither; then sure this idea must have been as well settled as those of light or sound are, and there could have been no more dispute or disagreement about it than about any other simple idea whatsoever.

And now, I hope, it may be concluded with some appearance of reason, that the duties we owe to ourselves are called virtues from their natural tendency to prevent harm to mankind and to promote their happiness. It seems too very likely, that the difficulty of making out their claim to this character has arisen from hence; that the notion

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of virtue is not contained in the more usual descriptions of these duties. Thus when *chastity* is defined to be *a perfect abstaining from all uncleanness*; and *temperance* to be *a moderate use of meat and drink*; or when *temperance* is used in a larger sense as comprehending both what we properly call so, *and chastity* too, and is said to *consist in the government of the sensual appetite as to all kind of bodily pleasure*; these definitions are such as shew us very well what the duties are; and they are such as both those, who affirm that every branch of chastity is a virtue, and those, who deny it, seem to agree in: and therefore, if they had contained the notion or essence of virtue, there could not have arisen any such dispute. But the truth is, that what makes an action virtuous cannot be discovered to belong to these sorts of behaviour without attending to their consequences. And they, whose experience and knowledge of mankind have taught them what the effects of chastity and temperance are, take one side of the question: whilst they take the other, who either have not observed these effects, or, because the ill consequences of the contrary behaviour are not necessary, have falsely supposed them to be neither natural nor probable.

Whole duty of man. c. 7. sect. 18.

Taylor's holy liv. &c. c. 2. sect. 2.

Tillotson fol. v. 1. serm. 51.

Scott's Chr. life. p 1. c. 3.

But if the duties, which a man owes to himself, have not enjoyed an undisputed title to a place in the catalogue of virtues, because the

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notion of virtue is not contained in the definition of them; then we may reasonably expect to find it in the definitions of justice and benevolence, which have always had an unquestionable right to the name of virtue: for if it had been otherwise, these duties must necessarily have had the same precarious title to this character. But one part of the notion of virtue before proposed is the definition of justice, as the other is of benevolence; for *just actions* are *those, which naturally prevent or guard against harm*; and *benevolent ones* are *those, which naturally do good.* This seems to confirm the point in question so fully and directly, that I might almost venture to leave it with the reader and let the truth of all, that has been hitherto advanced, rest upon it. Only here I would have him observe, that it is not the actual harm, which an action prevents, nor the actual good, which it does, from whence it is esteemed virtuous. We attend more to the nature of the action than to the advantages, which in fact arise from it; more to the effects, which it is fitted to produce, than to those, which it actually produces. A magistrate does justice to the public, when he condemns a murderer to death, though by the criminal's breaking his prison the sentence should never be executed. It may be a benevolent action to send relief to a distressed family, tho' the money should be embezzled by the person we trust it

to.

to. And thus the temperance of a man, who is either imprisoned for life or thrown upon a desolate island even without any possible hopes of returning again to live amongst mankind, may, notwithstanding no good comes of it to any one but himself, be a virtue: because the nature of the behaviour is the very same that it would have been, if he had lived in society; it is fit to do good and to prevent harm: these are the genuine effects of it, and from these it has its name; however by the circumstances of the temperate man or by any other accident it may be hindered from producing them.

But to return. The prosperity of the unjust and the misfortunes of the good, which are so frequently complained of, demonstrate, that unless mankind delight in contradictions, they do not place either the goodness or virtue of an action in its bringing good or happiness in this life to the man, who does it; for then virtue in misery would be an absurd and impossible supposition. And that no other notion of virtue except that, which I am defending, could give this character to justice and benevolence, may be shewn by the same arguments, that were made use of above in the case of temperance and chastity. The happiness of a life to come or the will of God may have made them duties; but the allowed distinction between moral and positive duties will sufficiently prove, that neither of these

considerations can make any ſort of behaviour be called a virtue. It muſt be ſomething elſe and not a moral ſenſe, which makes juſtice and benevolence virtues; if a moral ſenſe is nothing but that faculty of the mind which perceives virtue and approves it. And tho' it is allowed on all hands that theſe duties are virtues; yet, unleſs the idea of virtue had been better fixed and more determinate than it is, one can ſcarce believe it conſiſts in nothing but the approbation, which the mind perceives to be given by this internal ſenſe to ſome ſort of actions.

From what has been ſaid we may ſee the reaſon why a ſingle act of injuſtice is frequently enough to make a man be reputed vicious, tho' he ſeldom gets this character for any thing leſs than a habit of intemperance. Thoſe actions, which do harm are vicious; and to do harm is contained in the very notion of every act of injuſtice: but the miſchief of intemperance may ſometimes be avoided; it comes on by ſlow degrees, and is not always perceived, however does not become notorious, till the intemperance is habitual. The want of benevolence in any one inſtance would, I ſuppoſe, have been as odious as the want of juſtice is, and that for the very ſame reaſon, if it could have been as eaſily known, what good a man has omitted, as it may, what evil he has done: for

for where we are exactly acquainted with his circumstances and with the opportunities of doing good, that have been offered to him; we disapprove him for a single neglect and express our dislike of his behaviour in very strong terms without waiting till he is habitually unbenevolent.

[a] Sometimes indeed another notion of virtue, different from any that has been yet mentioned, seems to have been thought of; when being virtuous is represented to be nothing else but transcribing, as much as may be, the Divine character into our own lives: and so virtue is supposed to consist in the imitation of God. But what part of the Divine character are we to imitate in order to be virtuous? does virtue consist in the imitation of God's wisdom, or of those, which are commonly called his moral perfections? If indeed it is an endeavour to be like him in his wisdom; then chastity and sobriety may be virtues upon this scheme; because they keep the understanding cool, and preserve that temper of mind, without which it would be impossible to acquire any degree of wisdom at all. But *how can he get wisdom, who holds the plow and glories in the goad?* how can they improve

[a] Ἀλλ' οὔτ' ἀπολέσθαι τὰ κακὰ δυνατὸν (ὑπεναντίον γάρ τι τῷ ἀγαθῷ αἰεὶ εἶναι ἀνάγκη) οὔτ' ἐν Θεοῖς αὐτὰ ἱδρύσθαι· τὴν δὲ θνητὴν φύσιν καὶ τόνδε τὸν τόπον περιπολεῖ ἐξ ἀνάγκης. διὸ καὶ πειρᾶσθαι χρὴ ἐνθένδε ἐκεῖσε φεύγειν ὅτι τάχιστα. φυγὴ δὲ, ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν· ὁμοίωσις δὲ, δίκαιον καὶ ὅσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως γενέσθαι. Plat. Theætet. p. 129. A.

their understanding, who are given up to labour, who are enslaved either to the business of a trade or to the necessities of a mean condition? and yet in men of this character we expect to find virtue. So that either mankind are very unreasonable and require virtue of those, who can have no opportunities of practising it; or else we have some notion of virtue different from an imitation of the wisdom of God. Is it therefore an imitation of his moral perfections, to which we give this name?—But all the perfections of this sort, which we ascribe to the Deity, are justice, goodness, and veracity: it would be absurd, if not impious to talk of his chastity, sobriety, or humility: it is the business of the duties of temperance and moderation to regulate, not to extirpate the passions; but as God has no passions, nothing of this sort can with any propriety be applied to him; and when he is called a God of purity, it seems intended to express not so much what he is in himself as what he expects his creatures should be. This therefore is not the notion of virtue, which the sober part of mankind have, who think, that the duties of temperance are virtues; nor which the modest have, who give humility a place in that catalogue. Unless these duties can be looked upon as imitations of God, because they necessarily contain something of justice or of goodness: and this would be to say what cannot much affect

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the queſtion before us; for it ſeems to be much the ſame whether we place the notion of virtue in imitating God in an inclination to do good to his creatures and an averſion to hurting them without cauſe, or in cultivating the ſame affections without taking into the account any pattern, that we follow; becauſe that behaviour, which is virtuous, when we copy ſome example, would have the ſame nature and deſerve the ſame title, though we copied none.

Sometimes it is ſaid that we imitate God, when we act agreeably to our circumſtances and to the relations of things; becauſe this is what he always does with the moſt unalterable exactneſs. But one of theſe particulars cannot with propriety be called an imitation: by acting agreeably to our circumſtances and condition we no more imitate him, than a ſober man can be ſaid to imitate a rake, whilſt each of them acts in character. However let it be granted, that this may be called an imitation, and then it will follow, that in this account of virtue there was no occaſion to take notice of any ſuch thing; becauſe the idea of it is not here placed in the imitation ſo much as in conforming to our circumſtances and to the relations of things, that is, in fitneſs of action and fitneſs of application. And if virtue conſiſts in fitneſs of action, or is nothing elſe but the acting in character, we ſhall be as much at a loſs to determine whe-

Wollaſton ſect.1.prop.9.

whether justice and benevolence are virtues, as we were before about chastity and sobriety, till the character of a man is settled, and either fact or abstract reasoning have made them proof of it. Enough has been said already to shew, that fitness of application or using things as being what they are, could give us no distinct notion of virtue in any instance whatever without having recourse at last to that, which I have been endeavouring to support.

The last instances of behaviour, where the usual ways of speaking and judging seem to shew what notion men have of virtue, are those, which are called virtuous, when they are likely to do good, and vicious, when they are likely to do harm. The instances, that are to be appealed to in this place, must not be called avarice and ambition; because avarice is a name, that always signifies something wrong, and so does ambition too, for when we would use it in any other sense, we are forced to soften it a little and call it a laudable ambition. But to desire and accumulate wealth, to thirst after and at last acquire power is not always vicious: for then every man, who grows rich, and who has more money than he can make use of, must lose his reputation; and a virtuous man in power would be not only an unusual thing, but a contradiction.

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The characters of the griping uſurer and of the cruel tyrant are indeed deteſtable: but the induſtry of the merchant and the zeal of the true patriot deſerve our eſteem. Yet here the very ſame objects are purſued both by thoſe, who are not vicious, and by thoſe, who are: ſo that in the nature of the thing deſired there is no difference between the odious and the amiable character. Nor is there any appearance of reaſon for ſaying, that the deſire of wealth or of power is more conſiſtent with the nature of man in the inſtance where it is allowed and even approved of than in that where it is diſliked and condemned. What then are the relations, what the fitneſs and order of things, that are diſturbed and broke in upon by the covetous and the ambitious, but not by thoſe, who ſeem to have the ſame inclinations, and who engage in the ſame purſuits? how does it happen, that the ſame deſires ſhould be wrong in them and not in theſe? is it becauſe ſuch deſires are wrong, when they are carried to exceſs; but allowable, when they are reſtrained within due and reaſonable bounds? —— Let us therefore enquire, how theſe bounds are determined, and wherein the viciouſneſs of the exceſs conſiſts: and perhaps it may be found, that it is not the deſiring too much money or too much power, that is blamed; but the deſiring either of them more than is conſiſtent with ſomething elſe. And if we

can diſcover at the ſame time what this ſomething is, which gives even oppoſite characters to the ſame deſires; which makes them vicious, when they interfere with it, and exalts them into virtues when they advance it; we may with ſome degree of certainty conclude, that this is the ſtandard of virtue.

The character of the merchant is not vicious, nay it is virtuous, though he heartily deſires and uſes the moſt likely means to bring in a large profit at the year's end, if he carries on a fair trade without oppreſſing or hurting any one; if he keeps exact accounts and is punctual in giving every man his due, that has any demand upon him; if he does juſtice to himſelf and his family by living in a manner, that is agreeable to his circumſtances and ſtation, and by giving his children ſuch an education as will make the fortune, which he leaves them, moſt beneficial to themſelves and to the public. He is more eſpecially eſteemed, and is called a good man, let his clear gains be ever ſo great, if he omits no opportunity of aſſiſting the diſtreſſed and relieving the neceſſitous; if he never overlooks the miſery of his fellow-creatures nor ſtops his ears againſt the cries of the unfortunate. But though the uſurer ſhould not raiſe a tenth part of the fortune, that the merchant does; and though his views ſhould terminate here, that is, though his deſires ſhould be re-

reſtrained to a ſum ſo much ſmaller; yet he is viciouſly covetous, if he purſues his end by ſtarving himſelf and his family, by neglecting the education of his children, by keeping all the money he gets, and by uſing all the mean arts of fraud and exerciſing, when he dare, all the violence of oppreſſion. Whatever makes the difference between theſe two characters muſt be that, which makes the difference between what we call virtue and what we call vice: and this is nothing elſe, but that one of them does no good and much harm: whilſt the other is more than conſiſtent with the happineſs of mankind, it tends very much to the advancement of it.

The inſolent and cruel tyrant does not thirſt more after power than the honeſt and ſincere patriot does. Only the latter endeavours to get authority and influence by doing good; and when he has obtained what he wanted, he employs it in promoting and ſecuring the happineſs of the public. Whilſt the former, wholly unconcerned for any good but his own, firſt raiſes himſelf by a ſeries of fraud and injury, that is, by a continued violation of the happineſs of thoſe, who ſtand in his way; and then uſes his power in a manner quite agreable to the arts, which procured it, to make thoſe miſerable, whom he ought to have protected, and to waſte and deſtroy his fellow-creatures. Thus the good or harm ariſing from

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the desire of power makes one of these characters virtuous and the other vicious: for this is all, which distinguishes the father of his country from the oppressor of his people.

Since therefore, in the disputes whether some particular actions have any claim to be placed in the catalogue of virtues, the first and most usua enquiry is, whether they do good or prevent harm; and either of these properties is sufficient to make out their title: since those instances of behaviour, which include doing good or preventing harm in the very notion of them, have always been allowed to be virtuous, and the contrary have been universally esteemed vicious: and lastly since the very same sort of behaviour is called virtue when it does good, and vice when it does harm; whatever distinctions between virtue and vice may have been invented by refining and metaphysical moralists, this is the only one, which common use has established; and therefore is the only one, which common sense has made.

CHAP. III.

The distinction between virtue and vice has a foundation in nature and is not merely notional. The Fable of the bees *examined.*

AS I undertook in the foregoing chapter to determine wherein the nature of virtue consists; I may possibly not have satisfied all my readers by proving that such behaviour as is fitted to advance the good of mankind or to prevent us from doing them harm has been universally called and esteemed virtue. Some of them may object, that I ought to have gone farther, and have enquired, not what behaviour has the *name* but what has the *nature* and *essence*, not what has been *called*, but what really and truly *is virtue.*

If they, who make this objection, confound the notions of virtue and duty; if by expecting to have it proved that the behaviour, which has the name given to it, is really virtue, they mean, that this behaviour should be shewn to be the same, which nature and reason dictate to us, and which God requires of us; I will endeavour to satisfy them in another part of this work: the properest place for doing it will be, when I come to explain the cause of moral obligation and to prove that virtue is our duty. But if we keep these two Pag. 20. 21

notions distinct; then I confess, that I know but little difference between what is really and truly virtue and that sort of behaviour, which by common consent is called so, or to which the name virtue belongs. If indeed I were to be asked whether each particular action is *a virtue* or *a vice* only because men have thought fit to call it by this or by that name; I should answer, no: for murder will be a vice, though you give it ever so mild a title; and chastity would not become indifferent, though all mankind should agree not to call it a virtue. But this does not affect the enquiry in the last chapter; the design of which was, not to draw up a catalogue of *virtues and vices*, but to settle the notion of *virtue in general* and find out the mark, by which our actions are distinguished into those two sorts; not to shew which *particular actions* are *virtuous*, and which are *vicious*, but what that *quality* in them is, *by which they are made so*. For the *general words virtue* and *vice* are names given to two opposite *sorts of behaviour* or to *certain qualities by which our actions are made of this or that sort*: and, when we know what quality these names stand for, we know as much of the true nature of virtue and vice as we possibly can want to know. God did not give names to things, nor did the constitution of nature direct us in imposing them: they are arbitrary marks and stand for the ideas of him, that uses them:

them: and he makes ſuch an uſe of them as is proper and natural, who takes care to give them no other ſenſe, but what conſent and authority have warranted; he uſes them ſo as not to diſpleaſe God, who takes care never to miſlead mankind by them to their detriment. Nature or, to ſpeak more properly, the Author of nature, He, who made things as they are, has made one ſort of behaviour totally different from another: ſome actions are in themſelves fitted to produce good or happineſs and others evil or miſery to mankind; this I hope to prove immediately to the reader's ſatisfaction: and if the former ſort have been conſtantly called *virtue* and the latter *vice*, this is all we need enquire as to the reality of virtue; for though nature made the difference, it was man, who gave the name. When we deſcend to particulars indeed and would prove this or that action to be *a virtue*, it is not ſufficient to alledge that all mankind have agreed to call it ſo. If murder does harm, calling it a virtue will not make it one; becauſe giving it the name does not give it the quality, which this name ſtands for; it does not alter the nature of the action and make it do good. And if chaſtity makes us uſeful and beneficial to mankind, though all the world ſhould deny it to be a virtue, they could only rob it of its title; they could not ſo change the quality of it as to make it either do harm or be quite indifferent.

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Upon the whole therefore; when we enquire whether this or that action is *a virtue* or *a vice*, it is not a ſatisfactory anſwer to ſay it is a virtue, becauſe men call it one: whatever ſtandard they make uſe of in dividing our actions into ſorts, it is poſſible for them to miſapply it in particular inſtances; whatever quality makes an action virtuous, they may imagine that ſome actions have this quality, which in fact have it not. But when we enquire what *virtue in general* is, or *what quality makes an action virtuous*, this is no more than enquiring *what ſort of behaviour* or *what quality in our behaviour* the name virtue belongs to: and the moſt proper way to determine this is by finding out how the word has been uſed: for though that action is not always virtuous, which may have been honoured with this title; yet that quality in our behaviour is really and truly virtue, which mankind by general conſent have called ſo.

The only farther doubt that can ariſe here is, whether there is any ſuch quality; whether ſome of our actions have a natural tendency to do good and others a natural tendency to do harm. And to ſhew by abſtract reaſoning, that this diviſion of our actions into morally good and evil is not merely notional, that this diſtinction between virtue and vice is not arbitrary but has a foundation in nature, would I believe be very unentertaining and perhaps to ſome of my readers not

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very convincing. I ſhall therefore attempt the proof of it by examining the principles, that are maintained by the author of the *Fable of the bees.*

This writer's definitions of vice and virtue agree almoſt exactly with the account, that I have given of them above. "Mankind, he ſays, have by "common conſent called every thing, which, "without regard to the public, man ſhall com- "mit to gratify any of his appetites, *vice*; if in "that action there ſhould be obſerved the leaſt "proſpect, that it might either be injurious to any "of the ſociety, or ever render him leſs ſervice- "able to others: and they have given the name "*virtue* to every performance, by which man, "contrary to the impulſe of nature, ſhould en- "deavour the benefit of others, or the conqueſt "of his own paſſions out of a rational ambition "of being good." V. I. pag. 34.

When I read theſe definitions, I cannot help being afraid of having it ſuſpected, that I favour all this author's ſentiments: for, except what he ſays of its being *contrary to the impulſe of nature*, my idea or notion of it is the ſame with his. And yet when I look back to his title page — *The fable of the bees, private vices, public benefits* — or when I conſider the concluſions, which he endeavours to make good in his book; I find more reaſon to think, that we diſagree even in the notion of virtue, notwithſtanding his definition, than

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to be afraid of appearing to favour any of his opinions. For if private vices are really public benefits, then an action is not called vicious merely because it does harm; since many, which are called so, do good: nor is the name of virtue appropriated to those actions, that produce happiness; since many, which have this effect, are branded with the name of vices.

V. I. pag. 37. But whatever is his meaning when he represents virtue and vice as the contrivances of politicians; whether it is, that they first observed some actions to be naturally beneficial, and others naturally hurtful to mankind; or that they first gave the name of virtue to such behaviour as does good, and the name of vice to such as does harm: whether he thought, that virtue and vice are merely notional, that no actions have naturally any beneficial tendency, but are made advantagious to mankind, that is, virtuous, by the art and good management of wise men and lawgivers; or that the practice of virtue in a constant endeavour to do good is recommended to us only by the address of politicians: let his meaning be any of these; and I may agree with him in his notion of virtue without coming into the opinion,
Ibid. which he attempts to establish, *that all the moral virtues are no better than the political offspring, which flattery begot upon pride.* For the notion may be the same, whether it was first discovered,

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the prieſt or the layman; whether the vulgar or the politician firſt gave the name to it: the word may ſignify the ſame thing, when it is uſed either by them, who think ſome actions are naturally virtuous, or by others, who look upon the good, which any action produces, to be wholly owing to art and management: it may have the ſame meaning in the mouth of the Stoic, who recommends virtue from its own intrinſic excellence; or the Chriſtian, who embraces it from faith in God's promiſes; or of the rake, who imagines that he has found out the trick, and that the prieſt and the politician have contrived to flatter him into this practice for their own ſake, and to pay him in fair words for the pleaſure, which he parts with whilſt he promotes their advantage by being virtuous.

If our author's definition of virtue is one, that he will ſtand by; then what he propoſes in his title page and endeavours to make out in his book will be as difficult to reconcile with his own notion as it is with mine: and I might fairly take the advantage of every thing, which his admirers would ſay in his defence; for whatever can clear him of the charge of inconſiſtency will ſupport the account, that I have given of virtue, againſt the ſtrength of all his concluſions, though they ſhould be true even to demonſtration. If he only deſigned here to tell us what is the common

distinction between virtue and vice; and [illegible] when he undertakes to shew that private vic are public benefits, some notion of vice differen. from this and peculiar to himself; unless he had explained the sense, in which he uses that word, it will be impossible to say, whether he has proved his point, and how far I may be concerned in it, if he has.

Perhaps he thought, that the distinction between virtue and vice is merely fantastical, that one sort of behaviour may do as much good in the world as its opposite; and therefore, that men may, if they will, agree to call some actions vicious, because they are generally supposed to do harm, and others virtuous, because they are generally supposed to do good, but a penetrating eye will easily see that there is little reason in nature for such a distinction, and that every action, which we call vicious, is of advantage to the public as well as those, and perhaps more than those, which we call virtuous. Thus in his two favourite instances of *luxury* and *drunkenness*; if the word *vice* signifies that sort of behaviour, which does harm, and luxury or drunkenness does good; then these are no vices, whatever odious names we may be pleased to call them by. And if the same could be shewn in all the actions of our life, which are looked upon as vicious; it would follow, that, whatever distinction politicians may make be-

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tween the notions of virtue and vice, yet when we come to facts and experience, we shall find, that nature has made no difference, but that one action is as good as another, and that as much benefit accrues to the public from the prodigality of the rake, as there does either from the industry of the man of business or from the generosity of the Christian.

Thus we may allow for a small inaccuracy of expression, which seems to have been owing to the necessary conciseness of a title page; and may, when he says that *private vices* are *public benefits*, suppose him to mean that many actions, which are called vicious, do as much good as many others, which have been honoured with a name of better repute: and, since virtue and vice are no otherwise distinguished than by doing good or harm; as all actions are indifferent in themselves, or are all equally productive of good under proper management; these names are affixed to the several parts of our conduct in an arbitrary manner, and without any sort of foundation in nature.

In this sense his opinion is consistent enough: but it will be necessary to shew that it is not true. The wiser and more thinking part of mankind, who very justly believe that there is a real distinction in nature an essential difference between virtue and vice, will be prejudiced against any

account of the idea of virtue, which might take away this diſtinction and leave a poſſibility for this difference to be only fantaſtical, arbitrary, or notional. And beſides; though the book has many admirers, the author may have fewer; and perhaps thoſe, that he has, are not much concerned, whether he is conſiſtent with himſelf or not: they may be willing to give up his definitions of virtue and vice, and may adhere to nothing but the concluſion, which he has undertaken to ſupport: and they, who are perſuaded that private vices are public benefits, and yet believe that in calling ſome parts of our conduct virtuous and other parts vicious regard was had to a real difference in nature, will never look for this difference where I have placed it; becauſe the good, which may ariſe from any part of our behaviour cannot poſſibly diſtinguiſh virtue from vice in their opinion, who look upon the conſequences of the latter to be at leaſt as beneficial to the public as thoſe of the former.

Let us therefore examine, in ſome of his own inſtances, what the advantages are, which the public receives from the vices of private men. And here it muſt be owned, that the word *luxury* is certainly made by common uſe to ſtand for ſomething, which is wrong: but then it is as certain, V. I. p. 108. that what he calls *luxury* is not the behaviour commonly meant by that title, nor is it ever eſteem-

esteemed vicious unless by monks and ascetics. Every thing is not *luxury*, that is not immediately necessary to make man subsist as he is a living creature; but *every thing either in dress or the manner of living, that takes up more of a man's time and thoughts than is consistent with the good, which his station of life has enabled him to do; every thing, that weakens his intellectual faculties, impairs his health, or spoils his temper.* Though a day-labourer might subsist well enough as a living creature upon the very coarse diet, which he provides for himself the rest of the week; yet a man, who should call his sunday's dinner luxury, would be laughed at, if he put on a grave face at the same time, and spoke as though he was serious and meant what he said. A gentleman of fortune, who dresses well, who has a splendid equipage, and keeps a good table, does good to the people employed by him and no harm to the public: it is better to find work for the poor than to maintain them in idleness; and it is better to assist the tradesmen by laying out his money with them than to give them the same sum for nothing. In the mean time what is left at his table and some little superfluities in his fortune will be enough to assist and support the old and infirm, who live in his neighbourhood and are not able to work. It may be proper to help others too, when they happen to fall in his way; but it is not expected, that

that he ſhould make any his daily care beſides thoſe, who are juſt under his eye: and much leſs is it expected, that he ſhould maintain even theſe in the ſame way, that he lives in himſelf. wholeſome food and plain cloaths are more agreeable to their taſte and will make them happier. To uſe a fortune in this manner is magnificence and hoſpitality; no body of ſenſe reproaches a man for it, and true Chriſtianity is far from diſcouraging him.

Ibid. But this writer is afraid, that, "if we abate "one inch in the ſeverity of his definition of "luxury, we ſhan't know where to ſtop. When "people tell us they only deſire to keep themſelves "ſweet and clean, there is, he ſays, no underſtanding what they would be at; if they made uſe "of theſe words in their genuine, proper, and "literal ſenſe, they might ſoon be ſatisfied with- "out much coſt or trouble, if they did not want "water: but theſe two little adjectives are ſo comprehenſive, eſpecially in the dialect of ſome "ladies, that no body can gueſs, how far they "may be ſtretcht. The comforts of life are likewiſe ſo various and extenſive; that no body can "tell what people mean by them, except he knows "what ſort of life they lead. The ſame obſcurity "he has obſerved in the words decency and conveniency; and never could underſtand them, "unleſs he was acquainted with the quality of "the

"the persons, that make use of them. People may "go to church together and be all of one mind "as much as they please; but he is apt to believe, "that when they pray for their daily bread, the "bishop includes several things in that petition, "which the sexton does not think on." He adds, that "by all this he only designs to shew, that, "if once we depart from calling every thing luxury, "that is not absolutely necessary to keep a man "alive, then there is no luxury at all; for if the "wants of men are innumerable, then what ought "to supply them has no bounds; what is called "superfluous to some degree of people, will be "thought requisite to those of higher quality; "and neither the world nor the skill of man can "produce any thing so curious or extravagant, "but some most gracious sovereign or other, if it "either eases or diverts him, will reckon it among "the necessaries of life; not meaning every bodys "life, but that of his sacred person."

If his account of luxury had agreed with the common sense of mankind, he would not have wanted these reasons to defend it: and if what he calls by this name is any thing, which differs from what the rest of the world call so; though he has an undoubted right to use any word in what sense he pleases, when he tells his reader beforehand how he designs to use it; yet he must not take it ill, if his reasons for going out of the way should not have

have weight enough to make every body else use it in the same sense that he does. We may grant without scruple, that in every definition of luxury except his own, and perhaps in his too, it will be impossible to determine what is luxury in any man till we know his quality and his circumstances: but this will never prove that all other definitions are wrong and that his therefore must be the true one. Does not the very same thing happen in almost every vice and in almost every virtue? the definitions of them are general; and, when we come to apply them in particular instances, before we can affirm that a man has practised such a virtue or been guilty of such a vice, it is necessary to be acquainted with his condition, his temper, and several of the relations, which he bears to mankind. If intemperance consists in drinking to excess; then, where one man would be called intemperate, another, who has drank just as much, might keep clear of the charge.
V. I. p. 12. *A proud man is one, that overvalues and imagines better things of himself than any impartial judge, throughly acquainted with all his qualities and circumstances, could possibly allow him:* no body therefore can tell what people mean, when they say, that a man is proud, except it be known what way of life he is in, whom they call so; what his
V. I. p. 135. age, his rank, and his fortunes are. If "the beard-"less ensign's pride shews itself by counterfeiting

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"a gravity above his years, and by ſtriving with "a ridiculous aſſurance to imitate the ſtern coun- "tenance of his colonel;" then the ſame gravity and the ſame ſtern countenance in the colonel himſelf, where it is natural and not put on, would be no pride at all. It is *charity to give ſuch aſ- ſiſtance to mankind as their wants and neceſſities require, and as our own abilities will allow of:* but if we were asked, whether it is charity to ſend five pounds to a poor family, that have had their houſe and goods burnt; we ſhould find it dif- ficult to give an anſwer, till we had enquired what circumſtances the man is in, who deſigns to ſend them this relief: if he is a man of fortune and can ſpare ſo much, we ſhould call it charity: if he has a large family of his own and but a ſmall income, we might very juſtly think it vanity in him to part with ſuch a ſum: or if he was much in debt, it would rather be injuſtice to his creditors than charity to the ſufferers, to ſend any thing at all. And ſince the neceſſity of knowing a perſon's rank and fortune his age and even ſomething of his conſtitution, before we can determine what would be intemperance or pride or charity in him, does not put us upon finding out new de- finitions of theſe words and upon giving them a meaning different from what they have in com- mon uſe; why ſhould we be more diſſatisfied with ſome little variety in the application of the word

luxury to particular inſtances? As we have examples enough in the names of virtues and vices of all ſorts to defend ourſelves by; the moſt exact writer had better uſe the word in ſuch a ſenſe as to be underſtood by every body than go out of the way in order to make it determinate.

But the definition, that was intended to be ſo very exact an one, does not quite keep clear of the difficulty, which the author of it took ſo much pains to avoid. Though there will be but little variety in what we call luxury, if we mean by it every thing, which is not abſolutely neceſſary to keep a man alive; yet ſtill ſome variety there will be, as long as the ſame ſort of food and in the ſame quantity will not ſuit with every conſtitution; as long as a man whilſt he is in good health has
1 Tim. c. 5. v. 23. no abſolute occaſion for any thing but *water*, *but ſhould uſe a little wine, when his ſtomach grows weak and his infirmities frequent*. And ſince we know, that St. Paul adviſed Timothy to this change in his way of living; we may be ſure either that Chriſtianity does not call every thing *luxury*, [a] which this writer has called ſo, or elſe that it does not place luxury of all ſorts in the catalogue of vices. For ſuppoſe we agree to his definition and call it *luxury* to eat any thing but apples or acorns and to drink any thing but water: it will then be ſelf-evident that the luxury of private men is the ſupport of trade and muſt be for the advantage of the

[a] Brewing and baking. Fab. of the bees V. I. pag. 184.

the public: but till he has shewn that every thing, which exceeds this simple diet, is a *vice*; he has by no means a right to conclude from hence, that private vices are public benefits. He thought indeed, that if any abatement was made in the rigour of his definition, there would be no such thing as luxury: because, as what is superfluous to one degree of men will appear requisite to those of higher quality, there will at last be nothing so curious or extravagant, but some body or other will reckon it amongst the conveniencies and comforts of life. But sure it is possible to exceed even where a great latitude is allowed of; and let men reckon as they please, yet common sense will tell us, when they have exceeded: if their dress is so affectedly different from others of the same condition as to shew, that it takes up too much of their time and thoughts; if they have more servants than they can possibly find employment for, and so a number of people are made idle, who might otherwise have been useful to the public; if the far-fetched elegance of their entertainments should betray a mind curious in trifles, and the expence of them shew an overfondness for what does not deserve any part of a wise man's care; then magnificence degenerates into luxury, and hospitality into lavishness.

A general, it is true, may command, or a senator manage a debate, a judge may decide a cause, or

a merchant make up his accounts as well after rising from all the fopperies of a modern entertainment, as if they had only satisfied their hunger with plainer and less expensive food. And whilst this is the worst, whilst nothing happens, which may disqualify a man from executing his duty in general or that of his station in particular; we do not so much condemn the vice as laugh at the folly of these expences and despise the little-minded wretch, who can please himself with trifles. But the misfortune is, that we seldom have an opportunity of laughing long: for it is very unlikely, that he should continue an able statesman, a vigilant general, a prudent magistrate, or an industrious tradesman, who has his thoughts taken up with — *what shall I eat? or what shall I drink? or wherewithall shall I be clothed?* — and if he goes one step farther; if he drinks to excess and makes others do so too; if he sleeps away great part of his time or gives it up to pleasure; if by high living he impairs his understanding and weakens his constitution; if his expences are above his income and oblige him to contract debts, which he can never be able to pay; *this is such luxury as is vicious: and to prove, that this is beneficial to the public, it ought to be shewn, that drunkenness, sensuality, sloth and injustice are so.*

The great advantage, which the public is represented to receive from a man of this character, is,

is, that he circulates the money and ſupports the trade of a nation. But upon enquiry very few will be found to be the better for him in compariſon to the number, that are ſure to ſuffer by him. If he is employed in any public office, a great part of the nation may be the worſe for his debaucheries: his expences will lay him open to corruption, and are ſuch conſtant and powerful temptations to diſhoneſty as very few have been found able to reſiſt: and if he does reſiſt them; yet his engagements will either make him neglect his duty entirely, or at beſt prevent him from diſcharging it ſo well as he otherwiſe might have done. In a private condition his tenants muſt be oppreſſed to ſupport his way of living: and, as his income when ſtrained to the height will commonly be too little to ſupply his extravagancies, his creditors muſt break, and their families be ruined. His own childern too will ſuffer upon his account; their conſtitutions will be weak and their minds be very early debauched beyond the poſſibility of ever being corrected by the beſt education: though indeed ſuch a parent very ſeldom takes much care about a virtuous and uſeful education for his children: and if the reader was to recollect what he has obſerved himſelf in the families of gentlemen of this turn; he might find, that, though a man of good conſtitution and proper improvements may amidſt all his debaucheries be tender of doing harm and continue able to do ſome

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service to mankind; yet his children have not often the same natural abilities, and if they have, they scarce ever meet with the same improvements. To say, without considering all this, that luxury does good, because the tradesmen, who are paid, make their advantage of it; shews as much short-sightedness, as if a Roman, who lived at that time should have maintained that Hannibal's behaviour at Capua was of general service to mankind, only because the safety of the Roman state depended upon it, not remembering, that what was useful to himself and to his countrymen was the ruin of the Carthaginians.

Liv. lib. 23.

It is possible, that this author, who thinks a vicious luxury so beneficial, might not consider either the few, who are gainers, or the few, who are losers by it: his view of things seems to have been more comprehensive and to have taken in a whole nation at once, which, he fancies, must receive considerable advantages as a public body from having its money circulated by the debaucheries of the subject. This piece of service in his opinion the drunkard more especially, and even pick-pockets and house-breakers, the worst of the people, do their country. But he might have observed that in the circulation of money it is not the vice of them, who squander away their fortunes, which is so beneficial to the public; it is the industry and management of those, who gather

Fab. of the bees V. I. pag. 82. &c.

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it up. All the riches of a nation can be of no more use to it whilst they are passing through the hands of the slothful, the effeminate, and the debauched, than if so many porters had been employed to keep them constantly circulating from one banker's shop to another. A man, who uses his money ill, necessarily passes it into other hands; but whether the public shall receive any advantage by the change, depends upon the character of him that it is transferred to: if this owner is as vicious as the former, a second transfer will be made; and a third or fourth in the same manner; and yet no sort of benefit will arise from the circulation: for it does not in the least advance the public good, till it comes round to a different set of men, to the industrious, the sober, and the honest: and had it been in such hands at first, the public would have had no occasion for vice to draw it out.

We may see whose hands the money must come into, before it does good, in his own account of the advantages, which a highwayman brings to the public: "He supposes him to have met with "a considerable booty and to give ten pounds of "it to the next common woman he fancies, to "lay out in dressing herself: by which means it "is made to pass through the hands of an hundred "different tradesmen before a week is at an end." And if the tradesmen, that she lays her money out with, were as "desirous to gratify their senses,

Fab. of the bees. V. I. p. 84.

ibid.

to

" to have victuals, strong drink, and lewd women;" as he represents those of the highwayman's character to be; would they be long able to carry on their business? or would they do much good to the public, whilst they are able? the money must be employed by men of better character in order for it to be of any benefit: and this writer was sensible that it must be so, if we may judge from the last piece of service, which he supposes this fellow
V. I. p. 85. to do for his country. " His money being near spent, " he ventures again on the road; but for a robbery " committed the second day he is taken with one " of his accomplices, and the next sessions both " are condemned and suffer the law. The money " due on their conviction fell to three country " fellows, on whom it was admirably well be- " stowed. One was an honest farmer, a sober pains- " taking man, but reduced by misfortunes: the " summer before by a mortality among the cattle " he had lost six cows out of ten; and now his " landlord, to whom he owed thirty pounds, had " seized on all his stock. The other was a day- " labourer, who struggled hard with the world, " had a sick wife at home and several small chil- " dren to provide for. The third was a gentleman's " gardener, who maintained his father in prison, " where, being bound for a neighbour, he had " lain for twelve pounds almost a year and a half: " this act of filial duty was the more meritorious,

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"because he had for some time been engaged to
"a young woman, whose parents lived in good
"circumstances; but would not give their con-
"sent before our gardener had fifty guineas of
"his own to shew. They received above fourscore
"pounds each, which extricated every one of them
"out of the difficulties they laboured under, and
"made them in their opinion the happiest peo-
"ple in the world." He would not, I imagine, have us confine our thoughts to the benefit, which the farmer, the day-labourer and the gardener are supposed to receive in this instance; for then all he could hope to prove by it must be, that private vices are private benefits: and perhaps he would not have thought to prove even this from it, if he had recollected, that it was not the highwayman's vice, but their own act, which made them happy; it was not his robbing but their taking him, which gave them a title to the reward. It was their virtue too and not the crime of the other, which the public received the advantage from by the reward being so admirably well bestowed. One would think, that the author himself was aware of this by the pains he takes to heighten these three men's character and interest the reader in their favour: for if it had been otherwise, if he had no design of placing that good to the account of vice, which is owing to virtue; why should he have made any mixture of virtue at all in stating

the case? he was to prove that vice is beneficial to the public; and to try whether it is so or not, the fairest and most certain way would have been to state his case in such a manner, as to have nothing but vice in it. And I fancy every one would have seen that no other advantage would arise to the public from this whole transaction, but that of hanging the highwayman; if he had supposed the reward for taking him to have fallen to one of his accomplices.

Nor does it appear from the instance before us that actions owe their beneficial tendency only to the address and management of politicians, that what we call virtue does no more good than what we call vice, but that any sort of behaviour will be equally subservient to the public happiness when prudently conducted. For what though the reward due upon the highwayman's conviction is well disposed of? what though it falls to the share of honest people, who will use it to good purposes? this never entered into the legislator's thought, when he offered the reward: he designed it not as the instrument of virtue in the hands of those, upon whom it should be bestowed; but as a motive to engage somebody or other to take the highwayman; whether some honest and pains-taking man, who had been made poor by his misfortunes, or such idle people, as might think this the easiest way of getting money to support them-

themſelves in their vices, it mattered not to him: all [illegible] wanted was to have it in his power to free [illegible]lic from one, whom he looked upon as a very hurtful member of ſociety: and the reward, which he offered, might as well have been ſubſervient to the madneſs of the rake as to the induſtry of the farmer: as he took no care to limit it to a day-labourer, who had a ſick wife and family to maintain, and who would uſe his good fortune to this purpoſe; it might poſſibly have fallen into the hands of one in the ſame ſtation of life, who by having ſo much money beforehand would have been made idle and uſeleſs ever after: it might, for any thing the politician did, have as eaſily been the reward of villainy in one, who made it his common trade to diſpoſe of ſtolen goods, as of piety in the gardener, who maintained his father in priſon.

We may therefore conclude, that there is in nature a difference between vice and virtue; an eſſential and not an arbitrary diſtinction between one ſort of behaviour and another, which all this author's art and popular diſputation has not been able to confound: and farther, that it is not the buſineſs of the judicious politician, if he would make a ſociety happy, to look upon all actions as indifferent in themſelves and to think that by his addreſs and skill he can make all ſorts of behaviour alike ſubſervient to the public good. He

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should rather follow nature, and use such means of happiness as are fitted to produce the end he aims at: he should encourage virtue, and endeavour to suppress vice, where it is in his power, or to prevent the bad effects of it, where it is not. By which however we do not mean that he should banish trade and reduce mankind to wear no other clothing, but what is absolutely necessary to keep them warm, or to eat and drink nothing else, but what will subsist them as they are living creatures; because it has been shewn that calling every thing beyond this by the name of *luxury* does not make a vice of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The terms moral good, moral agent, and moral obligation explained.

THE word *moral* in almost all its uses has a reference either obvious or remote to the Latin word *mores*, which signifies *behaviour*. What do we mean by *moral truth*, but such as *relates to the conduct of our lives*? What by *moral science*, but the branch of philosophy, which *lays down rules for that conduct*? *In* most instances of *behaviour, we act upon probable evidence*; we eat and drink without having demonstration, that we shall receive proper nourishment; we use exercise without being strictly certain, that it will keep us in health; we engage in business, where it is likely we shall succeed; and children are educated as if they were to outlive their parents, because in the ordinary course of nature the chances are on this side: when probable evidence is applyed to this purpose, it is with propriety called moral evidence; and this being the principal as well as the most familiar use of it, *such sort of evidence* has from hence got the name of *moral* in all other instances.

Good does without all doubt very frequently signify what is of use or advantage, that is, *what*

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produces good or affords happiness. Thus a field, which the owner receives considerable profit from, and a house so contrived as to afford him the conveniencies of living are called good: a horse is a good one, if he does his master the service, that might be expected from him; and a dog, if he answers the purposes either of pleasure or security. *Good* indeed of this sort is called *natural* good: but when we speak of *moral* good, there is no reason for thinking, that we use the word in a different sense. *That, which naturally, or by necessity,* without design or sense of duty *produces happiness, is called naturally good:* and *he, who does the same by his behaviour,* that is, with choice, by design, and under a sense of duty *is called morally good.* By this means the notion of *moral goodness in an action* is made, as it ought to be, the same with the notion of virtue; *its tendency, to produce good, or,* what differs very little from it, *to prevent harm.* But moral good is distinguished from natural good in another sense: for sometimes we speak of them as if they were parts of a man's character as if they belonged to him or were in his possession. In this use of the words by the *moral good* of a man we mean *that part of his behaviour, by which* he *makes others happy:* and by his *natural good that happiness which is enjoyed* by himself. The former of these distinctions is in danger of being taken away by some of the writers upon dis-

disinterested virtue, and the latter by others of them. For what is the difference between the natural good, which our fortunes do us, and that moral good, which is in the behaviour of those, who relieve our wants; if it is as natural for man to do good, as it is for a stone to fall downwards, so that without doing violence to his constitution he could not behave otherwise? And what does a good man differ from an happy man, what becomes of the other distinction between moral and natural good; if there is no real enjoyment, nothing, which deserves to be called happiness, but what consists in doing kind offices to our fellow-creatures?

Other accounts have been given of moral good; but how true they are, will best appear from examining how well they agree with the common use of this expression. When an author has defined moral goodness to be "some quality apprehended "in actions, which procures approbation, attended "with desire of the agent's happiness," he has an undoubted right to use the words in this sense, and to deduce what consequences he can from such an use of them. One most certain consequence is, that, though we have no private advantage to promote by it, no views of interest or prospect of happiness, without the sanctions of law or the authority of a superiour, we cannot but approve moral good: for this is only saying, that neither hope nor

Hutcheson, inquiry & pag. 104

nor fear engages us to approve what procures our approbation. But then it will be unfair to extend this consequence to moral good in its usual sense, if common use has given it a sense different from this. As suppose the most usual meaning of moral good to be the production of good or happiness by moral agents; we may approve what we do approve or what procures our approbation without approving this; we may be most disinterestedly fond of what we have an affection for, without being at all fond of justice or benevolence. And this is the great danger of using words, even after we have defined them, in a sense different from their common one; that, when we have found out consequences, which are true, whilst the words are used in our own sense, we are very apt to think them true too, after we have, without being aware of it, changed the meaning of the words and taken in all, that they ever express in their more usual acceptation.

That the definition now before us does not answer to what is ordinarily meant by moral good is very evident. First, because one part of the description, *that it raises a desire of the agent's happiness*, cannot with any consistency be a part even of their notion of moral good, who define it in this manner. For if moral good was a quality, which made us desire the happiness of every one, who shews it in his conduct; then, as this quality

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appears in our own conduct, our love towards ourselves must encrease; the more we practise moral good, the more we must desire our own happiness; we must grow selfish in proportion as we are virtuous; and be the more interested, the more benevolent we are. Either therefore it must be allowed, that our sense of moral good and our affection for it do not reach to our own behaviour; and then the practice of virtue can receive no advantage from a moral sense, which has a relish for it only in other men, but disregards it in ourselves: or else the practice of virtue must be fatal to itself by strengthening that self-love, which is represented by these very moralists as the only thing, that can stop the operation of the public affections, and keep the ballance always inclined towards the side of private interest. Either of these consequences will be destructive of their opinion, who look upon this moral sense and these public affections as the foundation of virtue: and therefore this part of the definition of moral good must to them appear not only unnecessary but improper: and since it is their own definition; when they have given it up, I fancy, no one else will think himself concerned to undertake the defence of it.

Secondly, the procuring approbation cannot be the common mark, by which the good of an action is distinguished from its other qualities; because there are many, which meet with appro-

bation and yet do not come up to this character. *Such behaviour as pleases people of sense and breeding*, such as is approved in common life, where vice and virtue are not concerned, is what the ingenious author of the *inquiry into the original of our ideas of beauty and virtue* will never call moral good: this name cannot belong to it in their language, who are acquainted with a well known distinction between good morals and *good manners*. The architect does not indeed build, nor does the designer plant; but the share, which both of them have in the work, may be called action: and, when the work is liked, this action has such a quality, as procures approbation: the work of a good painter pleases; and good execution in music is approved: and yet none of these actions, though they have this quality, have any thing in them, which is called moral good. Nor is any such title ever given to them, even when to this quality the other is added: they are not moral good, when we love the artist so much for the ingeniousness of his work, as to wish him well or desire his happiness.

Locke's essay &c. b. c. 28. § 5. Moral good and evil are sometimes defined to be "the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law, whereby good and "evil is drawn on us from the will and power "of the law-maker." But this account differs as much from the common notion, as the former does.

does. Can they mean any thing like this by moral goodness, who speak of it as an attribute of God? is there any law prescribed to him, upon the observance of which he is to be made happy by the law-maker? Can they, who distinguish moral duties from positive ones, think, that the moral goodness of an action consists in making him happy, who does it, in reward for the obedience, that he pays to the authority of a superiour? —this is the effect of one sort of duties as much as of the other, and therefore this notion of moral good would have left no room for such a distinction. It may perhaps be thought, that this distinction is ill-grounded: and suppose it to be so; suppose that upon enquiry one sort should be found not to differ from the other: yet they, who made the distinction, must be allowed to have thought moral good something different from the agreement of an action to a law, in consequence of which the agent receives happiness as his reward: and they, who dispute against the distinction, think so too; or else they need have given themselves no farther trouble but that of producing their definition of moral good, and the whole controversy would have been decided at once. The moral good of voluntary actions does indeed consist in their producing good or happiness, but then it is the good or happiness of others, not of him, who does them. Is not the goodness of God his dis- pag. 20.

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position to make his creatures happy, which shews itself in his conduct towards them and in his government of them? Is not the moral goodness of those duties, which are from that quality called moral ones, their tendency to advance the happiness of mankind? and are not positive duties distinguished from them by having either no such tendency at all but by positive institution or however none, which reason can discover?

Moral goodness belongs to those beings only, which are called *moral agents*, that is, to *such as are capable of good and bad behaviour*, and this they cannot be, unless they have a sense of duty joined to a power of acting with intention and design. The pistol is as much concerned in the mischief that is done, as the assassin is, who discharges it: and the dutiful son, who supplies the necessities of his father's declining age, does no more than an estate would have done without his assistance. But there is no moral evil in the pistol; nor would there be any moral good in the estate: and neither of them are called moral agents, because both of them want liberty or a power of acting, and so are upon the matter no agents at all. The leach may ease a man of as much pain, as the kind traveller preserves him from, who finds him fallen from his horse and lets him blood: but want of design makes that be no moral good in one, which is so in the other; and the supposed incapacity of hav-

ing ſuch deſign excludes the leach from all claim to the title of a moral agent. But the viper, which bites, does it with as full deſign of hurting as the ruffian, who maims: and though the faithful ſervant may defend his maſter more effectually than his as faithful dog could have done, yet one does his endeavour as well and with as much intention too as the other does. What is it therefore, which puts the difference between the brute and the man in theſe inſtances? What makes the behaviour of the latter morally good when his actions have a tendency to produce good or to prevent harm, and morally evil when they are of the contrary ſort; and yet does not give the ſame title to what is done by the former, where the circumſtances of both ſeem to be very much alike? Or why is one a moral agent, the other not ſo?—Liberty of action and deſign they both have, and the only difference between them is, that one acts under a ſenſe of duty, the other does not; one has or may have conſtant motives for doing good and as conſtant diſſuaſives from doing harm, the other neither has nor from its imperfect uſe of reaſon ever can have. Thus upon the whole we find *a moral agent to be one, that has liberty of acting, and is capable of acting with deſign and under a ſenſe of duty.* And as the moral goodneſs or virtue of an action, when it is conſidered abſtractedly from him, who does it, conſiſts in its tendency to do good or to

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prevent evil; ſo the moral goodneſs or virtue of a man conſiſts in his doing ſuch actions without force or conſtraint, with intention, and under a
pag. 62. 71. conviction that it is his duty, or upon ſuch principles as will bear him out in all circumſtances. Unleſs ſome of theſe particulars are included in the notion of a *moral agent*, the good, which ariſes from inanimate beings would make them be called morally good; and unleſs all of them are taken in, that, which is produced by brutes, would entitle them to the ſame appellation. And indeed, where any of them is wanting even in man, whatever his behaviour may be, we do not allow, that there is any moral goodneſs in it. To do good when we cannot avoid it, or through caprice and by chance, without any ſettled deſign, or upon ſuch precarious motives as would fail in a thouſand inſtances, and leave us at liberty to do as we pleaſed, nay perhaps engage us in the oppoſite practice; no behaviour of this ſort has any thing in it, that can be looked upon as moral good, or that is ever known by this name.

Moral when applied to *obligation* is *ſometimes* uſed in its moſt extenſive ſenſe, and *means ſuch an one as affects our behaviour without deſtroying the notion of behaviour*, that is, ſuch an one as is conſiſtent with choice, liberty or freedom of action, and leave us under no neceſſary and unavoidable reſtraints: for nothing is called behaviour, which is not voluntary;

tary; this name does not belong to the beating of the pulse, the circulation of the blood or the motion of a convulsed limb. In this sense moral obligation is *opposed to necessity*, and we are said to be morally obliged to any thing, when we find more reasons for doing it than for letting it alone, and therefore do it, though we have at the same time a power to leave it undone. These reasons sometimes arise out of the accidental circumstances, that we happen to be placed in: and sometimes we consider one sort of behaviour as better and more reasonable than its opposite in all possible circumstances. The *obligation* to this best and most reasonable behaviour, that is, *to virtue*, has now almost engrossed the name of *moral obligation*: and when we enquire what is the *cause of moral obligation*, we mean, what is it, which *makes virtue the best and most proper behaviour in all conditions*; *what is the steady and universal reason for practising it*. Other reasons of a different kind there may be innumerable; but such as fall short of this character, such as are either too weak or too limited to have any influence in many cases, that may happen, can scarce with propriety be called by the name of obligation. Motives, which are precarious and narrow; which may perhaps at one time engage us to secure and advance the happiness of our species, but will leave us quite indifferent to their welfare at another; which may

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make us well diſpoſed towards one part of mankind, but will ſuffer us to be regardleſs of the reſt or even to look upon and treat them as our enemies, muſt, if they can be ſaid to oblige us at all, oblige us to ſomething elſe and not to virtue: for there will be many inſtances of virtue, to which ſuch motives do not extend; many, in which, though we allow them all the influence, that naturally belongs to them, they will leave us at liberty to be virtuous or vicious, juſt as chance or caprice ſhall direct.

CHAP. V.

No instinctive approbation of virtue is sufficient to oblige us to the practice of it.

THE common and ordinary feelings of mankind, the senses and perceptions, which are uppermost in the human constitution and are most attended to, plainly direct to private good and instruct each individual to provide for himself in the best manner he can. But some of the later moralists think they have discovered another sense in man, as natural to him as these are, though less observed; an appetite for doing good; a sense, which has virtue for its object and gives a disinterested approbation to all her dictates; an affection, which though it may perhaps be overlooked by the careless, or lie uncultivated in the minds of the dissolute, will yet sometimes break out and force even the most unattentive to take notice of the charms of virtue and the most abandoned to admire them.

Hutcheson's inquiry &c. pag. 158.

It would be foolish to think of disputing a man out of what he feels: for though we should not find this warm affection for virtue in our own breasts, others may find it in theirs: and if they do, it will be as impossible for us to convince them that there is no such thing, as it would be for a

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blind man to prove to those, who have the use of their eyes, that there is no such sense as that of seeing. It is granted therefore, that they, who say they love virtue, really do love it; we will not dispute what appears to them to be the evidence of an awakened sense. Though, if they were to consider what it is they love, and in what cases this affection exerts itself, they would find that it was raised in them by the desire of happiness, and that it is much less disinterested than they might otherwise think it to be; that the virtue which they are so fond of is something, which promises to make them happy; and that their fondness for it scarce ever extends farther than their hopes of being made so.

We may learn what it is they love from the account that they give us of moral good; for this is the quality in actions, which procures their approbation. Perhaps the meaning of the words approbation or love, which are used by these moralists to signify the same thing, cannot be explained by what men of art and science, would allow to be a definition: they are simple perceptions, and to know what they are, we must be sent to our own hearts for information; we must reflect upon what we feel there, when we approve or love. But love is often attended with other passions or perceptions, such as the fear of losing what we are fond of or the desire of possessing it: and,

Hutcheson's Inq. pag. 104.

and, that we may not confound one of these perceptions with the other, it may be proper and is possible enough to point out which of those, that are often in the mind at the same time, the name of love belongs to. "Any one reflecting upon the "thought he has of the delight, which any pre-"sent or absent thing is apt to produce in him, "has the idea we call love. For when a man de-"clares in autumn, when he is eating them, or in "spring, when there are none, that he loves grapes; "it is no more, but that the taste of grapes de-"lights him." And as virtue or moral goodness is that behaviour, which naturally secures or promotes happiness, it is no wonder, if we love or approve it. But in whom do we love virtue? do we love to practise it ourselves, or to have others practise it? are we fond of making it a part of our own character; or does this fondness appear chiefly, when we meet with it in the characters of other men? by attending to these circumstances of our approbation we cannot fail of knowing whence it arises. For if we love virtue, but have no relish for practising it ourselves where it interferes with our happiness; if we like a virtuous character, but have no desire or only a feint one for making our own such, unless when by being virtuous we expect to be happy too; all that we approve in virtue or moral goodness is the natural

Locke's essay. B. 2. c. 20. f. 4

good, which it either actually produces or at leaſt is fit to produce.

If a man, who does not practiſe virtue, ſays that he loves it abſtractedly conſidered; or that he approves doing good, though he does not conſider it as a part of any one's character, but only reflects upon the very nature and notion of it; there may be ſome difficulty in demonſtrating that he is fond of it for the good, which it may do to himſelf, and that all his love ariſes from the ſhare, which he ſuppoſes he ſhould have in the happy effects of it, when others practiſe it. But however backward he may be to confeſs the true cauſe of his affection, or however ignorant he may be of it himſelf, (which ſometimes for want of attention is undoubtedly the caſe) yet by obſerving how he is diſpoſed to virtue, when it does make a part of a real character, we may gueſs why he loves it when he conſiders it abſtractedly. Is not he the moſt fond of virtue, when he finds it in his friend or in his partner, where he is the perſon, upon whom it is exerciſed the ofteneſt, and where he reaps the greateſt advantages from it? If he is not aware of this, let him conſider in whoſe character he ſhould be moſt diſpleaſed with the want of it. Would not treachery from his friend or a cheat from his partner, be more ſhocking than the ſame treatment from any body elſe? and if theſe are the inſtances, where he diſlikes vice the

Hutcheſon's inquiry &c. pag. 112.

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ſt; is not it natural to think, that in theſe to was the fondeſt of virtue? He may indeed for want of attention have perſuaded himſelf, that he approves the character of a ſincere friend and of an honeſt partner as much where others are concerned, as where he is himſelf: and though he is not the happy friend, who receives advantage from the ſincerity, nor the fortunate partner, who thrives by the diligence and keeps up his credit by the honeſty of another; yet ſtill he may think that this ſincerity, this diligence and honeſty claim his affection, and never fail of meeting with eſteem and love from him wherever they are found; and that the contrary qualities would equally diſguſt him, though others and not he were the ſufferers by them. When he hears of generoſity, faith, humanity, or gratitude in men, who lived in diſtant ages; he will tell you, that he feels joy, admires the lovely action and praiſes its author: but cannot help feeling contempt and abhorrence upon the mention of cruelty, treachery, or ingratitude; though diſtance of time and place may have removed him far enough from feeling the ill effects of them. How then can he love virtue only becauſe he finds his account in it when others practiſe it; for does not he approve it in inſtances, where his own intereſt is quite unconcerned? how can he be ſuſpected of diſliking vice for the harm it does; for has not he an abhorrence of it, where he

Hutcheſon's inq. pag. 113.

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far enough out of its reach and cannot possibly be hurt by it?—He may love virtue in these circumstances just as he loves roses in winter, or grapes whilst another is eating them: it is the pleasure that he has in smelling the flower or in tasting the fruit, when they come in his way, which makes him love them: and to say that he loves them, there is no necessity for his actually feeling this pleasure; it is sufficient, that he can reflect upon it, and knows that they will give him it. And thus, when virtue is practised towards himself, it makes him happy; when it is practised towards others in circumstances where the influence of it cannot possibly be extended to him, he does not indeed actually perceive this delight, yet still he knows what it is, and can reflect upon it whilst another enjoys it. A nauseous draught is our aversion, even when it is out of sight, and when we are in no danger of being obliged to take it: and what is this aversion, but a sense that the taste of it is disagreeable to us? May not we therefore dislike vice in the same manner, even when it is absent, and, yet our aversion be owing to the misery it produces? for what though we do not feel the effects of the vicious man's behaviour? we know what the effects of it are; they are harm and misery to those, who do feel them: and a sense that these are disagreeable to us is all we mean by our aversion to his character. Our loving virtue, when it

it does not make us happy, and our hating vice, when the misery, which it produces, does not fall upon ourselves, will no more demonstrate, that these effects are not the cause of our approbation and aversion; than our loving roses, when we do not smell them or hating physic, when we are not taking it, will prove that our fondness for the flower and our dislike of the draught is owing to some other cause and not to the pleasure we may have from the former or the pain we may feel from the latter.

Some of the cases, which are usually brought to shew that our approbation of virtue must be disinterested, because we like it where we suffer by it, and that our hatred of vice must be so too, because we dislike it even where it is for our advantage, will, if they are attended to, clear up this matter, and prove perhaps the very reverse of what they are alledged for. If a condemned criminal was to be asked, whether he approves the sentence of his judge; I will grant, that he would say he approves it; and perhaps he really might approve it. But then he abstracts it from his own case, and does not consider himself as concerned in it: all that he means by it is, that such a sentence does good; and he approves it just as far as he can keep this good in view: to him it produces harm, and therefore in his own case he dislikes it: for it is difficult to imagine, that any one is fond

fond of what he wishes were otherwise, that the criminal in particular is fond of a sentence, which he would give any thing in the world to alter. and who is there, that would not in these circumstances, if it had been in his power, have bribed the judge to acquit him? though he knew himself that he deserved to be condemned, and that the judge would discharge his duty much better by giving him his deserts than by taking a bribe. And yet should he be acquitted by a sentence, which he used all his endeavours to obtain, we must confess that, notwithstanding this wrong behaviour was so advantagious to himself, he will dislike the corrupt magistrate, who gave the sentence. But this is so far from proving him to have any disinterestedly right affections, that it is just what he might be expected to do, if he approved virtue and disapproved vice upon motives of interest only: for if it had been otherwise, if his affections had been determined in a disinterested manner without any regard to happiness or misery; he must dislike a corrupt sentence as much in his own case as he would in that of another man; he must feel the same aversion to offering a bribe, though to save himself or his friend, that he would have felt, if it had been to save one, who was quite a stranger to him; he must abhor the sentence as much as he does the judge, and could not love the

the vice well enough to purchase it, whilst for that very vice he hates the man, who is guilty of it.

There is another very common instance exactly of the same sort. "A traitor, who would sell his "country to us, may often be as advantagious "to us, as he who defends us: and yet we can "love the treason and hate the traitor, we can at "the same time praise a gallant enemy, who is "very pernicious to us. Is there nothing in all this "but an opinion of advantage?" — It is plain there can be nothing else: for if it was not so; how could we distinguish between the treason and the traitor? how could we hate the character and yet love the action, which made that character what it is? The traitor's behaviour considered in general is such as does harm; and in this view we disapprove it: if we bring it a little closer to ourselves, and think upon the uses, which we might have of such a character; here again we find the man's temper is such, that he is not to be depended upon, he has betrayed his country and would probably betray us too, if we were in his power, and it should be for his interest: he is therefore one, that no voluntary services can be expected from, and that is prepared to do us mischief, unless we are upon our guard. There can be no other reason for our aversion besides this: because that very behaviour, which gave us a distaste to the man, is liked, as far as it does us service; for

Hutcheson's inquiry &c. pag. 123

we confessedly love the treason. In a general view of the traitor's character, without considering ourselves as concerned, we hate it, as it is hurtful: in our own case too we hate it, as we can never depend upon much good and may, unless we are cautious, receive much damage from it: whilst that part of his character, which has been serviceable to us at present, gives us all this while no sort of disgust. I suppose, after this I need not be particular in shewing why we should approve the hero, that defends us, rather than the traitor, that sells us his country; and yet that our approbation of a virtuous character may be owing to the happiness, which such a character dispenses, and our dislike of a vicious one may arise from the harm, which it does; though the behaviour of the hero and of the traitor is in this single instance of equal advantage to us.

It is easy to see upon these principles what we praise in a gallant enemy; and why, if we must have an enemy at all we had rather he should be of this sort than a treacherous one. We are more sure to suffer by an enemy, that will dispatch us without giving us any warning, than by one, who generously tells us his design beforehand and bids us be upon our guard. A general of an army with that good quality, which in a man of his character is called generosity, must be praised, and probably will be loved too even by those, that he fights against. But how do they love him? or what do

do they praise in him? can they be thought to love him as their enemy, when there is not a man of them but would take away his life or at least his liberty, whilst they see him in this light? no: their fondness is owing to the good, which he may do them: they know for instance, that, if they were to fall into his hands, he would use them well; that he would treat them with humanity as his prisoners; and would, if they were wounded, take as good care of them as their own commander would. They love him therefore, not as an enemy but as a man, in whom they have such an interest as some time or other they may have occasion to make use of; they are fond, not of what is pernicious to them, but of what may be useful; and praise him, not because he would wound them, but because he would take care of them afterwards.

The notions of moral and natural good cannot possibly be kept more distinct, than they are in this account of our approbation of virtue and dislike of vice, when practised by other men: if by moral good we mean that part of a man's behaviour, by which he makes others happy; and by his natural good, that happiness, which he himself enjoys. A sense of interest, which we cannot but have by reflecting upon the delight, that benevolent actions produce in us when they are exercised towards ourselves, may be the source of our approbation of a good man's character, who

Hutcheson's inquiry &c. pag. 11[illegible].

See pag. 62.

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lived in a diſtant age: and yet it will by no means follow, that we ſhould upon the ſame principles approve in like manner and love any one, who at the ſame diſtance of time found a treaſure or indulged himſelf in any exquiſite gratification. Though we like a man for his moral good, though we approve that part of his character, which is apt to produce happineſs, and though this approbation be nothing elſe but a reflection upon the pleaſure we feel, when we are the objects of ſuch behaviour; yet there is not the ſame reaſon, why we ſhould like him for his natural good. We may indeed ſuppoſe ourſelves to have lived in the ſame age with him, that found a treaſure or that gratified his ſenſes; and what if we had? his natural good would ſtill have been his own: no ſenſe of intereſt could recommend it to our eſteem; becauſe living in the ſame age with him would give us no ſhare in it. We may farther imagine it poſſible for theſe advantages and pleaſures to have been our own; and what would ſuch a ſuppoſition fix our love upon? not upon the man, who enjoyed them, for it is not his enjoying them that is fitted to give us pleaſure, but upon the advantages and pleaſures themſelves: and I do not doubt, but upon ſuch a reflection we ſhould find, that we like the treaſure, though we do not approve the character of him, who found it; and that we have ſome little fondneſs for the gratifi-

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cations, though we have none for him, who enjoyed them. Thus our love of his natural good and our approbation of him for his moral good depend upon the ſame principle, upon the happineſs, which either of them are fitted to produce: and to love his character in view to this happineſs, it is no more neceſſary for us to enjoy it or to heighten our imaginations till we bring it home to ourſelves; than it is, for us either to gratify our ſenſes in the ſame manner that we are informed he did, or to warm our fancy into ſome waking dreams of a preſent enjoyment like his, in order to love thoſe gratifications, which he indulged himſelf in.

But are not the perceptions of moral good perfectly different from thoſe of natural good, when we uſe theſe words in the other ſenſe of them and mean by natural good the advantage or happineſs, which is produced by brutes or by inanimate beings naturally or neceſſarily, without deſign or ſenſe of duty? "Are not the ſenſations and "affections toward a fruitful field or commodious "habitation very different from what we have "toward a generous friend or any noble character?" And yet if our ſenſe of good was not diſtinct from that of advantage or intereſt, one would think that theſe affections ſhould be exactly the ſame: becauſe the field and the houſe either are or may be as advantagious to us as the friend can be; and are much more ſo than a man of the moſt

See pag. 62.

Hutcheſon's inquiry &c. pag. 110.

most amiable character could possibly be, who lived many ages ago. To clear up this case, which is no very difficult one, nothing more is necessary than to distinguish between the advantage received and the cause of that advantage. The sense of happiness and the affection towards it will be exactly the same, whatever cause it arises from: whether a man is supplied with the conveniencies and comforts of life by the generosity of his friend or by the income of his own fortune: what he feels merely from the enjoyment of those conveniencies and comforts will be happiness, and the same happiness too in both instances. It may be said that he does not love his estate as he does his friend, though the advantages, which he receives from one are as great and as dear to him as those received from the other: but certainly he has the same affection for both sorts of advantage, though he does not approve in the same manner the causes, which produce them: and indeed if he approves the causes of them at all, it is because they contribute to his happiness; and just as far as they appear to have been the authors of his happiness, just so far his approbation of them reaches. In a virtuous action we seldom go higher than the man, who does it; he is commonly esteemed the first cause of our happiness and him we love. But we look beyond our estate or the rent of it: for though the land or the money are

the immediate instruments of our happiness, yet we may always trace it back to some higher source: and here again what appears to have been the first cause of our enjoyment is the object of our affection. The covetous, who neglect to enquire after and to consider the original of the wealth, which they are possessed of, and who look upon their money as the cause of all their enjoyments, set their affections upon their riches and are as fond of them as any one can be of a generous benefactor or of a sincere friend. If we go one step beyond the estate or the money, and fix our attention upon some prudent management or some piece of industry in ourselves; when we think, that the natural good we enjoy has been owing to our own address, and go no higher than this in our searches after its original; in these circumstances we grow fond of ourselves and of our own behaviour. Such an affection as this, which arises from esteeming ourselves the authors of our own happiness, is called pride: and no doubt the proud man has at least as much complacency in reflecting upon his own conduct as in observing that of others, who are the most eminently benevolent; and has as cordial an esteem for himself, as he has for the noblest character in the world. If we received our fortune from our ancestors, we love their memory. If the diligence and industry of honest and faithful servants improve

prove our estates and secure to us the advantages arising from them, we approve their service and value their persons. If neither reason nor revelation had taught us, when we look upon the sun, to praise him that made it; could we have *seen it walking in brightness*, have felt its genial influence, have observed how all nature rejoices at its appearance and languishes whilst it is absent; and *our heart* in the mean time *not have been secretly enticed*, or our *mouth not have kissed our hand?* What part of our regards would the cattle, that feed and cloath us, challenge, or what the fields, that produce grain for us and supply them with pasture; whilst we believed this fountain of light and heat to be the source of all our good? Our warmest affections would be directed up to this supposed parent and author of happiness in the grateful sentiments of a religious love; a love, which differs but little from that, which we bear towards a generous benefactor, who is so much our superiour as to put it out of our power ever to make him any return for the favours we have received from him. There is indeed no friend upon earth, who will have it always in his power to serve us; none, who can be so far exempted from the calamities of human nature as to be above our kind wishes for his safety and prosperity, though he may be so far above us, that we cannot contribute to either. But remove that imperfection in

in our friend, that inability to serve us, which is the occasion of a partial reliance upon his assistance; take away that weakness in him, which demands our good wishes and mixes them with our affection; and then we shall see what made the difference between the love of our benefactor and the love of our God: for by this means what was affection for him and friendship in his life time may, after death has removed his imperfections out of sight, have something of devotion in it and become idolatry. Upon every instance of natural good, true religion carries up our thoughts to the true author of it; to that God, *from whom every good gift and every perfect gift cometh*: and whilst we thus refer back all our happiness, to the fountain from whence it flows, we shall neither be in danger *of worshipping and serving the creature more than the creator*, nor be so fond of those enjoyments, which we receive from him, as to forget the giver of them. Whilst we retain this sense of his care for us, and of our dependance upon him; whilst we are persuaded, that whatever can administer to our support and comfort are favours, which he bestows; we shall enjoy the happiness, but shall love the author of it; we shall be nourished by the food or be warmed by the raiment, which he has provided for us; but our affections will not stop at the food or the raiment, we shall carry them on to the all-bounteous hand,

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which gives us all things richly to enjoy. Upon the whole therefore, when we are fooliſh enough to believe, that we owe the happineſs which the brutes or which inanimate things afford us, to theſe themſelves, then we value and love them: But if we refer our happineſs up to ſome higher ſource, the reaſon is by this time obvious why our *ſenſations and affections towards a fruitful field or commodious habitation ſhould be different from what we feel towards a generous friend or any noble character, though we have no ſenſe of good diſtinct from advantage or intereſt.*

There is ſtill a farther teſt, by which we may try both what our approbation of virtue is owing to, and what uſe it can be of to us in the conduct of our lives; and that is by conſidering this approbation as a principle of action, and by obſerving what influence it has upon our behaviour, and how far it engages us to be virtuous ourſelves. In this view we ſhall ſee that our love of virtue, whatever it ariſes from, is of little or no uſe in recommending the practice of it, that this affection, whether it is natural or acquired, ſelfiſh or diſintereſted, is too uncertain to be depended upon, and is too precarious and limited a motive to have the name of obligation given to it. This is the point, which I am moſt concerned to prove; the reſt I leave with the reader to think of as he pleaſes.

If any thing but the happineſs which a virtuous c[illegible]roduces, was the reaſon for ap-

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proving it; we ſhould be as fond of it in our-ſelves, as we are, when we ſee it or hear of it in others: if our moral ſenſe ſhewed us any thing in kindneſs and generoſity, that ſhould recommend them to our eſteem, beſides the delight, which ſuch behaviour is apt to produce in us when we feel the immediate influence of it; we muſt love to be kind and generous ourſelves as much as we love to have others ſo. For to approve virtue, and yet not be virtuous; to be paſſionately fond of a generous action, and yet never do one; to be in raptures, when we receive ſome ſignal favour from a man, who diſtreſſes himſelf to do us ſervice, and yet neglect to give aſſiſtance to others, when it would put us to the leaſt inconvenience, or even oppreſs them, if our own welfare and happineſs make it neceſſary; theſe are marks of an approbation not very diſintereſted: and, whatever we may pretend, the natural concluſion from ſuch a conduct is, that we approve virtue in others, becauſe it does us good; ſince we are careleſs about it in ourſelves, and *ſeldom* approve it well enough to practiſe it where it would hurt us; I might have ſaid *never*, unleſs ſome motives of happineſs are thrown into the oppoſite ſcale ſufficient to overballance the immediate inconveniencies, which we apprehend from being virtuous.

See p. 77-78. The objection from our approving the character of persons so far removed from us both in time and place as to make it impossible for their virtue to do us any good has been obviated already: where it was observed, that our approbation being only a sense of the delight, which some objects are apt to produce in us, we may reflect upon that delight, when the objects are absent, as well as feel it, when they are present. Or if any one thinks that to approve virtue, though on account of the happiness, which it produces whilst others practise it, should be called a disinterested approbation, because we approve it, whether we ourselves enjoy that happiness or not; he has my leave to call it so: but then it will be necessary for him, though our love of grapes or roses arises entirely from the pleasure, which they give us, to call this a disinterested affection, because we love them as we do virtue without actually enjoying the pleasure, which they are fitted to produce. The resemblance indeed does not hold in one part, for we have a peculiar sense, through which these sort of pleasures are conveyed; we taste the fruit, and we smell the flower: but the happiness, which virtue affords, may be taken in by any sense and by all in their turns, as the instances differ, in which it is practised; nor is there any occasion for a moral sense to give us the relish of it. When the benevolent man feeds the hungry, they taste his

his virtue: when he clothes the naked, it warms them, and they feel it: when he provides and administers physic to the distempered and languishing, the whole animal system is restored to its strength and vigour, and each enlivened sense relishes and enjoys his care and tenderness. Others, who are witnesses to his humanity and kindness, or who hear of it afterwards, love his virtue, though they do not enjoy it: a warm imagination may interest them in what another feels, and may make them feel something of it themselves: but they know without this, that such behaviour delights where its influence is felt; and by reflecting upon the thought they have of that delight, which such behaviour is apt or fitted to produce in them; they have the idea we call love. This love of virtue is attended indeed with a desire of enjoyment: but how do we desire to enjoy it? not by practising it ourselves, not by making it a part of our own character, for here we have little relish for it: our enjoyment of it is from others practising it; we could wish to have the virtuous man our friend, and, where it is in our power, we endeavour to make him so: we should be glad, if those, whom we have any dealings with, were like him; and we persuade them as much as we can, to imitate his example, and encourage them, when they attempt it. But whilst we are thus fond of virtue in others, thus desirous that all about

about us ſhould practiſe it; and yet in our own conduct are quite indifferent about it; whilſt we enjoy virtue in the character of others, but are fonder of vice in our own, till we find it as much our intereſt to be virtuous ourſelves, as it is to have others virtuous; let men pretend what they will, it is impoſſible to believe, that they love virtue for any thing but the happineſs, which it produces, or that their approbation of it is any thing but a ſenſe of this happineſs.

But the neglect of being juſt or benevolent is not allowed to be a ſufficient reaſon for concluding, that we do not approve the practiſe of virtue in ourſelves: the vicious are here called in as witneſſes in favour of that ſcheme of morality, which we are diſputing againſt. Theſe, it is urged, will confeſs, that what they do is with the greateſt reluctance; that they ſee the charms of virtue and cannot help admiring them, even whilſt they give them up and throw themſelves into the arms of her rival. The weight of this evidence is thought to be very great and almoſt deciſive; becauſe, where men condemn themſelves and their own practices, there can be no room to ſuſpect them of partiality. But though one cannot ſuſpect them of being partial, yet there is great room to doubt their ſincerity: their behaviour contradicts their evidence; and in ſuch a caſe we commonly judge of a man's ſentiments from

from his actions rather than from his words. It is more natural to think, that he may profess an affection for virtue, though he has really no sort of regard for it, than to believe it possible for him to be vicious, whilst he approves and esteems virtue in himself, whilst he is under a full sense of the deformity of his present conduct and has a hearty aversion to it. He may be willing to keep upon good terms with mankind; and knowing how pernicious his conduct is to those about him, and how certain he is to forfeit their affection if they think him regardless of their happiness, he may hope to keep them from thinking so by telling them, that he approves virtue, even whilst he is vicious, that he is fond of what is for their advantage, even whilst he neglects it, and cannot do them a mischief without being sorry for it. Such professions as these have commonly the desired effect: we are inclined to think, that a man, who loves virtue, means well in general, and will, though he has acted in opposition to it now, behave better another time: we impute the harm he has done to some unfortunate circumstances, in which he happened to be placed, and hope, either that he will never be again in the same circumstances, or that, if he is, he will be better prepared, and will adhere for the future to that virtue, which he loves, though in some instances he may have betrayed it. As long as the reluctance, which a man

man pretends to feel when he is vicious, is an allowed excuse for his being so; it is no wonder, if all men of this character should be ready to make use of a plea, which will set them right at once in the opinion of the world, and which, as they think, for want of knowing their hearts can never be over-ruled.

I do not mean, when I call this reluctance a pretended one, that it is always such: many do without all dispute actually feel it; though many more, who talk much of it, feel no such thing. But, when it is real, must it arise from instinct? may not it, where it is not owing to religious motives, arise from the fear of losing the esteem of mankind? We are sure, that other people would chuse to have us virtuous; and from the apprehensions that we might hurt them by an opposite behaviour, they will dislike us, if we fall into it. The desire of having them well affected to us, and the inconveniencies, which we may undergo from their disesteem and aversion, will be a sufficient cause for some reluctance, when we are doing what is vicious. If this was not the true cause of what the vicious sometimes feel, why should not they feel the same always? why should the fresh assassin start at the thoughts of killing a single man, when, with an army to support him, he would glory in murdering thousands? there can be no possible reason given why he should

should have more real affection for the practice of virtue in a private character, than he has in a public one, if nothing but natural instinct had given him that affection, and nothing but the charms of virtue had determined him to love it. Upon another principle this difference of conduc may easily be accounted for. The assassin is a defenceless individual, who is making all mankind afraid of him and is doing an act, which he is sure of being punished for, if he is found out. Whilst the conqueror has many, who are partners of his crime, many, who are interested enough in it themselves to protect him against all the dangers, which he might otherwise apprehend from those, that dislike his behaviour and that suffer by it. Why should a robber make a conscience of letting his companions have their share in the booty, which he has taken, and feel uneasiness and concern, when he secretes for his own use what, according to the rules of their society, they have a claim upon? Will any man tell me that this is owing to an affection for the practice of virtue? how could he, with such an affection about him, plunder the next honest man he meets without the least reluctance or scruple? I will grant, that the weakness of the instinct promoting him to virtue, and the insufficiency of it to restrain him from committing this fact, is not a direct proof that there is no such thing; but sure if they were

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the remains of such an instinct, which made him so unwilling to defraud his companions; though these last efforts of an almost expiring affection would not keep him from being unjust to others, yet they must occasion at least as much inward disturbance and reluctance, when he robs the innocent or fires an house and perhaps ruins a family. The fear of suffering for what he does will account for his remorse much better; his interests are united with those of his own clan, and he is apprehensive, that, if he is discovered not to be true to the common cause, he may be either betrayed to the magistrate, or be turned out from the company and left to shift for himself: but as for the rest of the world; since he knows that he has forfeited their good opinion, since he is sure that they cannot think worse of him than they do already, and that they are prepared to do him all the harm they can; he grows careless about his behaviour to them, and is not sensible of any reluctance, whilst he injures them; because no injury he can do them, after he and they are upon so ill terms, will occasion any new fears in his mind. Why should the treacherous villain, who has committed murder, feel indeed the most inexpressible anguish, till the fact is discovered, but afterwards grow easier, have but little concern upon him, and suffer death without much remorse? The crime is not more odious to him before he is known to be the

Account of James Hall 1741. pag. 18.

the author of it, than it is afterwards: the instinctive approbation would have the same effect upon his mind, when all the world know what he has done, as when no creature, but himself, is conscious to it. His fears however would have a different effect: for, whilst he is undiscovered, he stands fair in the opinion of mankind; but cannot help being under constant apprehensions of losing their esteem, and, what is worse, of being punished for his crime: after the matter is public, then he knows the worst of it, and having nothing farther to fear has no more remorse of conscience. Since therefore the vicious feel reluctance only where they are afraid of forfeiting the good opinion of mankind by their behaviour, or of being exposed to punishment for it: since the reluctance wears off as those fears abate; or changes into a despair, which hardens the mind and makes it quite insensible, whenever the inconveniencies, that were apprehended, appear inevitable; it is not improbable, that all the unwillingness to part with their virtue, which in some instances, even the most profligate experience, is rather an effect of what they fear from their vices and of what they might hope for, if they were virtuous, than any impartial testimony of their own opinion about virtue or of their natural affection for the practice of it.

Gratitude is a favourite instance of a disinterested affection: for though, when we look forwards upon a character, which may be of service to us hereafter, it might be possible for our regards to have something of interest and self in them; yet our grateful resentments appear not so liable to this charge; because these are *supposed* to look back only upon favours already received, and not to take in any other advantages than what we are in possession of.

To judge the better of our reasons for approving gratitude, let us consider, how we approve it in others, and how in ourselves. That we love gratitude in other men, when they are grateful to us, will never shew our affection to be disinterested. Whilst they return our favours we have a manifest advantage, and it is possible we may be fond of this, and may approve them and their character, because they do us good. Or if it is not in their power to make us any return; yet there will always be some use in having a set of men, who, we are almost sure, will never do us an injury, but will be ready to serve us in any case where we may have occasion for them, though perhaps we do not at present foresee any such. I think we cannot easily be positive, that our love of them and of their behaviour does not arise from this interested view: nay, it is more than barely probable, that it does arise from hence; if

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we conſider, that, ſhould we be brought into difficulties and they have it in their power to relieve us, our firſt application would be to them; and if they were to deſert us in our diſtreſs, we ſhould be more diſpleaſed at it, than at meeting with the ſame uſage from any body elſe: our diſlike of them afterwards would be as great as our love was before, and much greater than of any other perſons, who may have refuſed us relief as well as they, but who were not under the ſame obligation to us. And as the occaſion of this diſlike ſhews what uſe we expected to make of their gratitude upon a proper opportunity; as a diſappointment in what we expected from them does not only efface our love but turns it to hatred; a man, that does not deſire to be thought more generous than he appears to be from his behaviour, would own, that he is not quite diſintereſted in his regards for the character of one, who is grateful towards himſelf. In caſes where he has no concern the ſame is meant by approving gratitude as by approving any other virtue, and what this is, I have endeavoured to ſhew in another place. See pag. 74. 75. &c.

Gratitude in ourſelves is the moſt unfortunate inſtance, that could have been made choice of for the proof of a diſintereſted affection for virtue. Other virtues have nothing of *ſelf* in their compoſition when we conſider them only as virtues: the nature of them conſiſts in doing good to

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others without regarding how they behave to us; and the happiness, which any one receives from the virtues practised by himself, is not taken notice of till we come to consider them as duties, that is, till a reason is asked, why we should be virtuous. But without considering gratitude as a duty, without asking a reason why we are to practise it, selfish regards are contained in the very notion of it: present and future as well as past advantages are the object of *gratitude*; it is *an affection towards a character considered as beneficial to us.* I do not mean that no man ever continues his regards towards those, who after many acts of friendship grow negligent of his interests or even oppose them: we may after the example of God, engaged by his authority and
Luke vi. 35. supported by his promises, *be kind to the unthank-*
Matth. v. 44. *ful, and to the evil: we may love our enemies, and bless them, that curse us; we may do good to them that hate us, and pray for them, which despitefully use us and persecute us:* if we call ourselves Christians, this is our duty, and such a duty as we shall be sure to discharge, if we are with sincerity what we outwardly profess ourselves to be. But however these affections are raised and kept alive in us, we call them humanity, benevolence, or charity; they are never known by the name of gratitude: and what I would endeavour to shew is, that this name belongs to no other benevolent

volent affections but those, which regard such a character as was mentioned above, a character, that we consider as beneficial to us.

The readiest way to settle the meaning of the word gratitude will be to recollect what sort of men we are grateful to, and what change in their behaviour would either quite efface our gratitude and introduce instead of it the opposite sentiments of distaste and aversion, or else change it into those other affections of the benevolent sort, which are known by the names of forgiveness, pity, humanity, and love of enemies. One, who gives us all the assistance, that we have occasion for, who does us all the favours, that we could expect from the heartiest friend, and is as bountiful to us as the most generous of our benefactors, will never be the object of our gratitude, if it appears that in all this he had a view to some temporal interest, and had no other reason for endeavouring to advance our good, but because it happened to be the most effectual means of advancing his own: such a character as this is useful to us only by chance; the man has not our good at heart; there is no steady purpose of serving us; and the want of this prevents our gratitude. If he had been more disinterested in bestowing his favours, he might have had a title to it; and would not have failed of raising some grateful sentiments in us, if he had appeared to have no design but of making

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us happy. Should he afterwards change his con-duct, grow careless about our welfare and desert our interests; yet, as long as we could persuade ourselves, that these neglects were not so much owing to a want of inclination as of a proper op-portunity to serve us, the affection for him would remain, and would still continue to be called by the name gratitude. But suppose we saw plainly, that, when it has frequently been in his power to do us favours, he has not done them; that, when he has known us to have the most pressing occa-sions for such assistance as he might easily have given us, he has notwithstanding suffered us to be distressed for want of it; or imagine him after having promoted our interests to oppose and in-terrupt them, and to endeavour all in his power to throw us down from that happiness, to which he has raised us: in these circumstances as in all
1 Cor. xiii. 4. others our religion would teach us to *suffer long and to be kind*; but this affection is known by the name of charity, we do not call it gratitude. Men, who have never had their temper softened by the Christian discipline, might indeed think of re-turning his favours even after this usage; but they would make their returns with hearts full of a resentment very different from either gratitude or charity: they would repay his kindnesses rather to prevent the being upbraided with them than from any sincere and affectionate design of doing him

him service. Thus whilst we keep in mind the ill treatment, which we have received from those, who had once deserved well of us, our affections will be too much influenced by the sense of it to be of the benevolent sort at all: and if we forgive the mischief done to us, though it must be confessed that our affection is then a truly benevolent one, yet certainly it is not gratitude but charity. By forgiveness we blot out at once the memory of all past ill usage: but suppose a series of such usage had first worn away all impressions, which former kindnesses had made; then surely they, who were once our friends and after that our enemies, begin again with a blank character, as it were; and the name of gratitude no more belongs to our tenderest regards towards them than it does to the affections of pity and humanity, which we shew towards others of our own species, that have never done us either good or harm. It is possible that the traces of the favours received by us may be too deep to be easily effaced: and if our charity is lively and vigorous, it will secure them even from being much impaired; it will come in to our aid immediately; and, by throwing off at once all sense of neglect and injury, will prevent the effects, which such a sense is too apt to produce when suffered to continue long in the heart. In this case, our benevolent affections may preserve the name of gratitude; but then

it should be observed, that the sense of a character which is beneficial to us is kept up in our minds, and the hurt, that has been done us, is overlooked and forgotten.

A man's benefactors may have exhausted their fortunes in his service: they may by losses be disabled from continuing their favours to him, or by disgraces be deprived of that power, which they once made use of to raise and support him. But, let the abilities of his reduced benefactors be ever so small, they may still have an inclination to do him service: and it is plainly this part of their character, which is the object of his gratitude. For let their affections towards him cool, as their abilities to serve him decrease; let them use their little power in an impotent opposition to his interests, or neglect to use it in his service, where he expects what assistance they can give him; let them wish him ill, or not wish him well, when they have no other way of expressing their good inclinations but by their good wishes; in these circumstances the strong assurances, which their former favours had given him of their affection for him, would not suffer him to conclude at once that they had dropped all regard for his welfare; or *that charity, which hopeth all things*, might engage him to put a favourable interpretation even upon repeated instances of this sort. But what is that reasonable allowance? or what is this christian one? they

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are neither of them called gratitude; they are only the means of keeping our gratitude alive by representing the characters of men in an advantagious light, and by teaching us to think them more our friends, than they appear to be from their behaviour. After we are not only sure that we have lost their friendship, but that they would do us all the harm in their power; after the only branch of charity we can exercise towards them is that of *enduring all things*, then the only benevolent affection, which can remain, may surely be called love of our enemies; and this I fancy will be allowed to convey a very different notion from that, which the word gratitude is intended to signify.

Had we been at any time in a very distant part of the world, where some of the inhabitants had been particularly kind to us and had treated us with extraordinary civility and generosity; we should without doubt feel some tender affections, when we were taking leave of a set of men that we had been so much obliged to: and the sentiments of gratitude would remain even after we were gone from them, and were settled at so great a distance as to put it out of their power ever to do us any farther services. "But still we might "depend upon their constant friendship, kind memory, and good offices, though we were never to "see or hear the effects of them; and every time

Pope's letters to Dr. Atterbury. XXII

" that we think of them, we might believe they " were thinking of us." But if we were convinced, that after they had lost sight of us, they remembered us no more; or only remembered us with dislike and ill will; our tenderest affections for the absent would be the same that we feel in the like circumstances towards those, who live nearer us, such as are known by the names humanity, kindness and forbearance, and are never, or very improperly called gratitude.

I shall mention but one instance more, and that is of gratitude to God for the benefits and mercies we receive from him: this must be an interested affection, since it regards the favours that are expected as much or more than what are past. For had he placed his creatures here and made them happy for a while, with a design of making them miserable some time hence, and so much the more miserable for being happy now; if they were sensible of this or even suspected it, they would have little reason to thank him for what they enjoy at present; and their gratitude would probably be as weak as their reasons for being grateful. Or if he was only to withdraw his standing providence, and to leave them to provide as well as they could for their own happiness, without those settled laws of nature, which are now, when rightly used, the means of happiness; their thankfulness would cease with his protection,

tection, and after they had lost all hopes of future good from him, they would soon lose all sense of gratitude. Nothing can keep this affection alive but a continued disposition to do us good: it scarce regards either what we have enjoyed or what we are now enjoying any otherwise than as it is an earnest of what we may hope for at another time.

The reader must not expect me to prove, that no man ever acted upon disinterested motives, or that no virtue was ever practised without some selfish views. The Noble moralist has produced one instance of disinterestedness and without doubt more of the same sort may be met with. "We "may observe, says he, that in the passion of love "between the sexes, where, together with the affection of a vulgar sort, there is a mixture of "the kind and friendly; the sense or feeling of "this latter is in reality superior to the former; "since often through this affection, and for the "sake of the person beloved, the greatest hardships in the world have been submitted to and "even death itself voluntarily embraced, without "any expected compensation: for where should "the ground of such an expectation lie? not here "in this world surely, for death puts an end to "all: nor yet hereafter in any other; for who "ever thought of providing a heaven or future "recompence for the suffering virtue of lovers?" Shaftesbury, V. II. p. 105.

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There are too many advocates for this sweet enthusiasm, and they have too much authority with us to suffer it to be spoken against. But it is to be hoped, that they, who would call these sufferings a virtue and think it our duty to submit to them, will be so kind as to allow there may be a heaven provided to reward them. And I fancy the grave moralist, who would laugh at the mention of a future recompence for such virtue, will readily own, that he does not look upon it as any part of his duty: I would have him recollect at the same time how few instances there are of persons, that have really been enthusiasts of this sort, amongst the many, who would be thought such: they have certainly been too few to shew that this affection is a part of the human constitution. The truth is, no one can say how far an over-weaning opinion will carry us: we may raise affections in ourselves and cherish them, till they grow too strong for us, and get the ascendant over us: but the follies, the extravagances and even vices, into which they hurry us afterwards, will only prove, that they are our masters, not that they are natural. The mixture of the kind and friendly, which in the passion of love between the sexes is sometimes so much superiour to the affection of a vulgar sort as to make the greatest hardships be submitted to, and even death itself be voluntarily embraced for the sake of the person beloved, will

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no more demonstrate, that there are *naturally* in man any disinterestedly kind and friendly affections than the death of a [a] Bruno, a Vanini or

[a] Though I thought it well known that these three persons died martyrs either for atheism or for opinions little better, yet since I wrote this, I find that an ingenious Gentleman, who calls himself Hibernicus, says in a letter dated February 19. 1725-6 that some of these facts have been disproved long ago. His manner of saying this without referring his reader to any author, who has disproved them, made me imagine some plain confutation of these facts was as well known as I thought the truth of them had been: and I was a little ashamed not to know what author had shewn any of them to be false. I scarce imagine any one has been able to disprove what Sir Paul Rycaut tells us he remembers happened in his time [Present State of the Ottom. Emp. b. 2. c. 12.] "that Mahomet Effendi one of the "sect called Muserin was executed for impudently proclaiming his "blasphemies against the being of a God: and adds, that this man "might notwithstanding his accusation, have saved his life, would "he but have confessed the error of his present opinion and pro-"mised for the future an assent to a better: but he persisted still in "his blasphemies, saying, that though there were no reward, yet "the love of truth obliged him to die a Martyr." And I find that since the publication of these letters the learned compilers of the General Historical Dictionary knew as little of the confutation of these facts as I do: for in their article of Vanini, and in their supplement to that of Brunus [Jordanus], they relate the facts and confirm them by the old authorities without any appearance of doubt whether they were true. Particularly (Note I.) in the dispute between Mr. de la Croze and Mr. Heuman whether Bruno was burnt for a Lutheran or an atheist, they determine, that if Bruno had been only a Lutheran he might have lived very quietly at Rome; and that his books shew he went a great deal farther, his principles being calculated for nothing less than to overthrow all religion. Or if I had wanted all these three instances, it is I suppose well enough known, that many have died for errors; and that giving up our life in confirmation of our opinions will never prove those opinions to be either innate or true, but will only shew our firm attachment to them. The reader may remember that what is urged to prove the truth of Christ's resurrection, is not barely that the Apostles laid down their lives in

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Effendi will prove him to have a natural and disinterested love for atheism; or than the behaviour of a [b] Felton or a Clement will shew that nature has implanted in him a disinterested desire of doing mischief.

Some indeed might reply, that it was an affection for truth, which the atheists died for; since no man can distinguish between what is true, and what after the strictest examination appears so to him. But did the assassins sacrifice their lives to truth too? If so, then one instance shews us that piety and truth, and the other that virtue and truth are not the same thing; for in both of them there are the marks of a very warm affection for what appears to be truth without the least inclination towards either virtue or piety. Unless it should be said, that every thing is piety and virtue in a man, which he has persuaded himself to look upon in that light: and thus we may excuse all the per-

testimony of it: all that our most judicious divines prove from their martyrdom is that they believed the truth of Christ's resurrection: and this was not matter of opinion, in which considered as men without any extraordinary assistance (for so our adversaries would consider them) they might be mistaken; it was a matter of fact, to which they were eye witnesses; and therefore to make their evidence undeniable, nothing is wanted but an assurance of their sincerity, and this we have from their voluntary sufferings. Tryal of the witnesses &c. p. 104.

[b] Felton being asked by whose instigation he had murdered the Duke of Buckingham "answered with a wonderful assurance, that "they should not trouble themselves in that enquiry; that no man "living had credit or power enough with him to have engaged or "disposed him to such an action; that he had never intrusted his "purpose and resolution to any man: that it proceeded only from "him-

sons concerned in the Irish rebellion, the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, the Sicilian vespers, or the holy Inquisition: what they did would upon these principles be their duty, if they thought it so, and would be virtue in them, if they approved. Whatever reply others might make, I am persuaded that the moralists, with whom I am now concerned, will not defend their own opinion, upon such principles, as will put the affections so entirely under the conduct of the understanding, that the most malevolent ones would be right and virtuous, when a misguided judgment directs us to cultivate them: they have more regard to the sacred names of right and virtue than to suffer them to be given to the most infamous treachery, and the most savage barbarity.

Clarendon. B. IV. Thuan. Hist Lib. LII. P. Daniel Hist. de France Charles IX. an. 1572. Philippe III an. 1282. Baker's Hist of Inquis.

But suppose we had an instinctive approbation of virtue, suppose the reluctance, that we feel when we act otherwise than virtuously, to be owing to

" himself and the impulse of his own conscience." Clarendon's History of the Rebellion. B. IV. Father Daniel speaking of the murder of Henry III. of France says, Ce detestable parricide fut commis par Jacques Clément jeune religieux Dominiquain, natif du village de Sorbonne dans le Sénonois, homme d' un esprit foible, fort ignorant, qui s' étoit laissé transporter à cette fureur, par les continuelles et horrible invectives des prédicateurs de Paris contre le Roy, et par l' abominable doctrine, qui eut alors grands cours, et qui se débitoit dans les Chaires, que l' on pouvoit en conscience ôter la vie à un tyran, tel que les docteurs de la ligue depeignoient en toutes occasions Henri de Valois. P. Daniel Hist. de France. Henri III. An. 1589. A more full account of this matter as it was related by those, who applauded what Clement had done, may be seen in Thuan. Hist. Lib. XCVI. c. 8.

this principle; I see not how this can be made the cause of moral obligation: unless they, who think so, will grant, that the obligation to virtue is quite precarious, and that our true principle of action is a very unsteady one. For this instinct is much too weak to restrain us, that we can ... a sense of the beauties of virtue upon our mind, and under the full influence of our approbation of it, not only neglect to comply with its dictates, but even act directly against them. And what is still worse, if this unwillingness to give up virtue or if the supposed natural approbation from whence this unwillingness is said to arise, was all that obliged us to practise it, we should upon the same principles be as much obliged to be vicious; for no vicious man ever gives up a vice without reluctance: and such a reluctance must in one case as well as in the other be a mark of his naturally approving what he parts with so unwillingly. It is obvious to reply here, that a man, who has found some little pleasure in vice, and has by long practice and habit made it agreeable and almost necessary, cannot be supposed to give up these satisfactions quite unconcernedly: some regret he must feel at parting, though he had no natural affection for vice nor any such approbation of it as could make it his duty. I readily agree, that this is a true account of the matter: but then I must insist upon its being as reasonable

ble to expect that virtue, though we have no inſtinctive love or diſintereſted fondneſs for it, ſhould ſometimes be deſerted with as much reluctance by one, who has been well educated, who is not conſcious of having deſerved ill from any man, whoſe juſtice has ſecured him from the averſion and hatred of mankind, and whoſe goodneſs has made all thoſe his friends, that are acquainted with his character. His education will have taught him, that virtue will make him happy; and the eſteem and favour, which he meets with, will confirm his opinion. Theſe pleaſures will effectually prevent virtue from being indifferent to him: and as they make him leave it with reluctance at firſt; ſo if ever he ſhould quite withdraw himſelf from it; they will ſometimes recurr to his mind: and when they do, he will wiſh that he ſtood as fair in the opinion of the world as he once did; and will go on with leſs ſatisfaction in a vicious courſe than he would have done, if he had never taſted the joys of being beloved, nor had ever been aware how much more it is for our advantage to be upon good terms with mankind than to be at enmity with them, and how impoſſible it is to ſecure any ſhare of their affection without being virtuous.

One thing we may gather moſt certainly from theſe inſtances, which is, that if education does not give us our fondneſs for virtue, yet education can

wear it out; and long habit can introduce the contrary affection and make us fond of vice. And when this is done, are we obliged any longer to practise virtue? If we are; then it must be something else besides the affection for virtue, which obliges us to pursue it; since the obligation continues after the affection is lost: if we are not; then virtue will be but poorly supported by an obligation, that we may release ourselves from whenever we please; it is but enticing that fondness, which restrained us, and then we owe it no more obedience, but are immediately at liberty to act as we will without the apprehension of any farther inconvenience. And why should we keep this affection, when we can get rid of it? what obliges us to cherish and improve it? there are others, which appear in the mind as early as this does, and which have a more undisputed claim to be thought natural. No one ever so much as suspected, that the desire of sensual pleasure might possibly be an adventitious one and be only the effect of custom and education; but thousands have been fully convinced, that the love of virtue has no other original. Or suppose nature to have given us both these desires; why ought we to restrain one of them? nay more; why may we without being thought criminal extinguish it by long neglect; whilst it is our duty to improve the other and carry it up to its greatest height?

Why

Why are we obliged, when they interfere, to give the preference to the benevolent affection rather than to the sensual one? it is not because the former is the stronger of the two, for that is not always the case; it is not because the sensualist feels some reluctance, if he indulges the latter to the prejudice of virtue, for he would feel as much reluctance in mortifying his appetite towards pleasure in order to follow the virtuous instinct. And indeed if we look no farther than the affections themselves, there is no sort of reason why we should not wear out both of them, if we had a mind to it; or why, if we are to keep one, we might not as well extirpate benevolence by pursuing pleasure, as weaken our sensual appetites by neglecting to indulge them in order to comply the better with the dictates of benevolence. But if we do look beyond the affections, for reasons which oblige us to give the preference to our approbation of virtue and to preserve it, as far as we can, in its utmost vigour; those reasons, whatever they are, and not this approbation, are the true cause of our obligation to virtue.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

No eternal and necessary differences, no fitness or unfitness of things, can be the cause of moral obligation.

Clarke's Boyle's lectures P. 2. prop. 1. THE eternal and necessary differences of things and the consequent fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations one to another have been proposed as the most uniform and constant obligation to virtue. "For these are represented as causing it to be our "duty to act only what is agreable to justice, "equity, goodness, and truth; even separate from "the consideration of its being the positive will "and command of God, that we should do so; "and also antecedent to any respect or regard, "expectation or apprehension of any particular "private and personal advantage or disadvantage, "reward or punishment either present or future; "annexed either by natural consequence or by "positive appointment to the practising or neg-"lecting these rules."

In consequence of the supposed truth of this opinion; obligation is defined to be "a state of the "mind, into which it is brought by the perception "of a plain reason for acting or forbearing to act, "arising from the nature, circumstances, or re-"lations of persons or things." A very precarious ob-

Balguy's tracts p. 68.

obligation this, and such as in the judgment of See pag. 71 mankind would not deserve that name. Even those, who undertake to defend it, grant that happiness See Chap. III. is the chief end, which every man must and will pursue, and that virtue could not either naturally or reasonably be maintained without calling in the hopes of a future state, wherever a behaviour conformable to these relations and differences would interfere with that end. This is plainly not so much supporting this sort of obligation as introducing another quite distinct from it: to act agreeably to these relations, because God will make us happy for doing so, is a reason for acting or forbearing to act, which does not arise from these relations themselves, but from a quite different consideration, from the prospect of advancing our own happiness.

Perhaps the whole dispute might very safely be rested upon this single point: but as those, who have made concessions, are sometimes apt to retract them or to explain them away; when they find what conclusions may be drawn from them; I shall not content myself with shewing hereafter that by the confession of these writers the reasons for practising virtue, which flow from the differences and relations of things, are too precarious to deserve the title of obligation; but shall endeavour farther to prove that they afford us no reason at all for being virtuous.

There

There is without dispute a natural difference between one thing and another; good and evil, or happiness and misery are certainly not the same thing: if any one think they are, he need only consult his senses, and from them he may very soon have better information. And since moral good or virtue consists in doing good to others or in taking care not to make them miserable, and moral evil or vice in the contrary; one of these must differ as much from the other as happiness does from misery. But from this difference there cannot arise any obligation to the practice of virtue: for to say, that moral good or virtue is our duty, because it differs naturally and essentially from vice, is to make it our duty for such a reason as would equally have proved the very reverse: vice or moral evil must be as much our duty upon the same principles, since it differs naturally and essentially from moral good. All that can be gathered from this difference is, that between virtue and vice there is room for choice: but is the enquiry, — *whence the obligation to practise virtue and avoid vice* — at all satisfied by proving what must certainly be supposed before such an enquiry could be intelligible? for what could a man, who did not apprehend, that there is room for choice between one sort of behaviour and another, mean by asking — *why he is obliged to one sort more than to another?* the very question im-

implys, that he is aware of an opportunity of chusing; and can no way be answered, but by shewing a reason why he should chuse virtue rather than vice.

I should not have troubled the reader with a formal proof that the natural difference between virtue and vice, as it gives no preference of one to the other, cannot oblige us to either; unless I had observed, that in a favourite writer upon this subject *good to be done* and *reasonable to be done* are used as expressions of the same signification: and if, because we must grant that virtue from the very nature of it is good to be done, it was therefore reasonable to be done, and so our duty; its nature or what distinguishes it from vice might appear to be what obliges us to practise it. But having seen just now that this can be no cause of obligation, we may be sure there is some fallacy in the argument: and indeed it is not very difficult to shew where that fallacy lies. *Good to be done* signifies either good for him, who does it, or good for others: and this ambiguous meaning of the words seems to have been made too much use of. For as every body will allow, that what makes him happy who does it, or what is good to be done in the former sense, is fit to be done and reasonable, advantage is taken of this concession; and, because it will be readily granted farther, that virtue is good to be done, it is concluded, that virtue must

Clarke pag. 180.

therefore be fit and reasonable. Whereas in granting, that virtue is good to be done, we do not mean that it is in its own nature good for him who does it, but good for others: for if we go no farther than the nature of it, then this is the only sense, in which virtue appears self-evidently to be good. None but the Stoics and Peripatetics amongst the ancients and Lord Shaftesbury and his followers amongst the moderns ever thought otherwise; none but these maintain, that making others happy, is the happiness of him, that makes them so. The favourite author referred to above was himself of a different opinion; he saw and confessed that a man may be miserable whilst he is doing good to his fellow-creatures; or at least, that there is nothing in the nature of virtue itself, which should prevent it: whenever this is the case, he owns, that it would be unreasonable for men by adhering to virtue to part with their lives, if thereby they eternally deprive themselves of all possibility of receiving any advantage from that adherence. And thus, when he was engaged more immediately in the defence of his darling scheme of morality, he speaks of virtue as always fit and reasonable because good to be done: but when he comes to dispute from what common experience and his own good sense had taught him, he finds, that virtue upon some suppositions is not truly reasonable. Where he must allow, either that virtue is not in its own nature good to be done,

See Chap. VIII.

Clarke pag. 258.

See Chap. VIII.

done, or else that what is good to be done, may be so in a sense, which will make it very improper to use this expression as signifying universally the same thing with *fit and reasonable to be done.*

However, though this natural difference of things should be found not to produce an immediate obligation to the practice of virtue; yet does not it produce such a fitness or unfitness in the application of different things one to another as will make some sorts of behaviour evidently wrong and such as reason will disallow, others right and such as reason cannot but approve and recommend? Is not there, for instance, such a disagreement between misery and a being, which has perception, "that to give pain to a sensible creature, is an action self-evidently wrong, as being "directly repugnant to the nature of the object "and the circumstances of the agent;" that is, disagreeable and contrary to the nature of him, who feels the pain, and to the circumstances of him, who gives it? Balguy p. 74.

That such an action is repugnant to the nature of the object, or that there is an unfitness of application in giving pain to a sensible creature, is an expression, which wants to be explained. *Agreeable or repugnant to nature*, where a sensible being is concerned, are words of a doubtful signification; and, unless we are careful in fixing their meaning, it is possible they may mislead us. I cannot grant, that an action

 which

which gives pain to a ſenſible being is repugnant to nature, if by this is meant, that ſuch an action uſes it otherwiſe than its nature has fitted it to be uſed: for nature, which gave it perception, made it as fit to receive pain as to receive pleaſure. Does not the villain, who gives poiſon, apply the drug to a purpoſe, for which nature has fitted it? and does not he uſe the man, to whom he gives it, in ſuch a manner as ſuits with or is agreeable to his nature? I confeſs, he does not; if we uſe the word *agreeable* to ſignify what is pleaſing to his nature or what he likes: but ſince the event will ſhew, that the poiſon is as ſure to kill him as wholeſome food would have been to nouriſh him, it is plain that nature has fitted him for one ſort of treatment as well as for the other: he is capable indeed of happineſs, but then he is capable of miſery too; and he, who makes him miſerable, uſes him as much like what he is, and therefore acts up as much to the truth of things or the nature of things as he does, who makes him happy. Indeed if that only is called agreeable to the nature of a ſenſible being, which it deſires or likes to feel; then every action, which gives it pain is repugnant to its nature. But this repugnancy, it ſhould be remembered, depends upon the deſires of thoſe beings, that have perception, rather than upon the nature of things; for their averſions to miſery are as natural as their deſire of happineſs; and he, who gives

them

them pain because they have an aversion to it, has a reason in nature for what he does, no less than he, who gives them pleasure because they have a mind to it.

But who are those sensible beings, that are to be humoured in their inclinations? to whom is it unfit and therefore self-evidently wrong to give pain, because they dislike to feel it? Have not we feeling as well as they? are not the agents sensible beings as well as the objects? and must not it therefore be self-evidently wrong for the agents to give themselves pain? nay, is not it self-evidently right upon these principles to give themselves pleasure? by which however I mean no more than to make themselves happy. What then is to be done, when we can make ourselves happy by being vicious; or should be put to inconveniencies and be forced to submit to pain by persevering in our virtue? Are we obliged in these circumstances to neglect virtue and to pursue vice? if not, why should we give a preference to the fitness between happiness and our fellow-creatures, rather than to the same fitness between happiness and ourselves? why may we make an unfit application of misery to a sensible being in our own case, in order to avoid making it where others are concerned? Are we to judge of the importance of these fitnesses or unfitnesses by the quantity of happiness and misery, which a sensible being will feel from our behaviour, and

and so to look upon it as a duty to make that application, which will produce the greater happiness and avoid that, which will produce the greater misery? But certainly the judgment, nay the approved judgment of mankind does not form itself upon these principles: for if it did; then a virtuous action, that produces happiness to others without putting him, who does it, to the least inconvenience, makes a fit application of the highest importance; since in this method of judging those fitnesses must be the most important, where no unfitnesses are thrown into the opposite scale. But if such an action is of more importance, why is not it of higher value, and if so, why not more esteemed than one, which would distress him that does it? and yet, whatever the cause of this fondness may be, we all of us are fonder of virtue, when it meets with difficulties, when it exposes those, who practise it to hazard, and brings inconveniencies upon them, than when it has no disadvantages to struggle with but blesses mankind without hurting its votaries. Suppose a man should give more pain to himself by his virtue than happiness to others: would he be under no obligations to persevere? Upon these principles it is impossible he should; and, to do these moralists justice, they perceive and confess as much. Or suppose he should on the other hand do himself more good than he does others harm by his vice; is he at liberty to be

Clarke pag. 258.

vicious in these circumstances? if he is not, then balancing the quantity of misery produced by an unfit application against the quantity of happiness that results from making a fit one is not the method, by which we determine what our duty is: but if he is at liberty, then how poor a principle of obligation must this be, which will recommend virtue to us only where it is not against our interest, and will discourage vice only where we can get but little by it. They, who set out upon these principles, if they have a mind to be consistent, should never talk of the excellence and worth of disinterested virtue: for sure virtue must be most excellent when it is most reasonable; and if it ceases to be agreeable to reason, when it interferes with our happiness; then must its worth be the greatest of all when it advances our interests the most.

It cannot here be replyed, that I have been making impossible suppositions, and that virtue must necessarily make those happy, who adhere to it: for if it must; then either virtue is self-sufficient to the happiness of man, which the Stoics indeed might say, but these moralists expressly deny; or else the good providence of God will take care, that we shall upon the whole be no losers by our virtue; and so at last the will of the Supreme Being is called in, not to strengthen an obligation, which we should have been under without it, but to pro-

Clarke pag. 257.

See pag. 119.

produce an obligation, where there was none before, and to make the practice of virtue reasonable, where it would not have been so otherwise. I see not therefore the great use of this fanciful account of our duty supposing it could be defended: for if in the more exalted instances we must have recourse to the will of God, and can allow it in them to be a proper foundation to act upon; why may not we submit to it and entertain the same opinion of it in the lower instances? Why is this the only rational source of obligation in cases of the greatest importance; but a wrong and unreasonable one in cases where we meet with few or no temptations to be otherwise than virtuous?

And thus at last those, who contend that fitness of application is a motive, which obliges to virtue, are satisfied with having proved, as they think, that it is so in some instances. But perhaps what has been urged against their opinion, will shew that it is not a rational motive in any case; nor indeed any motive at all. Or if this has not been made appear already; let them consider farther, why it should be less a breach of duty to give pain to brutes than to our own species: they have feeling as well as we, and what causes pain is as disagreeable to their nature as it is to ours: and if this unfitness of application is not self-evidently wrong, then neither is that so, which gives pain to our fellow-creatures. For what is the

galleyman better upon these principles than he, who chains one of his own species to an oar? What can defend the butcher, that would not equally excuse the assassin? How does a Nimrod, *whose prey is man*, apply pain with more unfitness or where it is more disagreeable, than he does, who takes pleasure in a fox-chace? Is it our only excuse, that we take care in killing animals for our support or diversion to give them as little pain as possible? then why may not a man use the same excuse, and shew upon the same principle that he has not behaved amiss, when he has poisoned his father? for he may do this without giving near so much pain as animals must suffer in the ordinary ways of killing them. Or would they chuse to say, that the use we have from brutes will clear us of any thing wrong or criminal, when we give them pain only with a view of using them to some of the purposes or to the support of our lives.? —— And is not this to make what is wrong or contrary to duty in unfit application depend, not upon the unfitness itself, but upon a principle quite different from it, upon the interest we have in making or not making such applications? and would not a reason of exactly the same sort vindicate us in giving pain to our fellow-creatures, however little they may have deserved it, and however averse they may be to feeling it?

Wollaston sect. 2. obs. 5

To support this cause of moral obligation the defenders of it have attempted to prove, that in every unfitness of application there is an unfitness of action; or that to give pain is as contrary to the nature of the agent as it is to the nature of the object, and vice as disagreeable to the vicious man as the pain, which it produces, is to those, who feel it. But these writers, we must observe, do not mean, that it is disagreeable to our perceptions, to any instinct, affection, or moral sense, as they themselves expressly declare: it is reason, to which they think vice repugnant: and the argument to prove it has been thus stated by the most candid, the clearest, and most judicious writer, that ever undertook the defence of this scheme of morality. "We are certainly informed by our "senses, that pain is a natural evil; here is there"fore a plain and perpetual reason against the "infliction of it, when no stronger intervenes "to make it requisite. — In like manner we cer"tainly know that pleasure is a natural good; "here is therefore a plain and perpetual reason "for the production of it, whenever we have it "in our power, and are not hindered by a "stronger." The same argument is urged more distinctly in another place. "To give pain to a "sensible creature must be wrong in a rational or "moral agent having no cause or reason to give "pain, if it be morally unfit. And that it is morally un-

Balguy's tracts p. 75.

Ibid.

pag. 122.

" unfit, seems to me as plain and evident as any
" proposition can be. It is as contrary to the nature
" and truth of things as to give a thirsty man poison
" instead of drink. It is contrary to the nature of
" the object, because he naturally desires indolence
" and pleasure, and shuns pain. It is contrary to
" the nature and circumstances of the agent, be-
" cause he being rational must act unnaturally,
" whenever he acts unreasonably. And he must
" act unreasonably, when he acts both without and
" contrary to reason. Now he is supposed to have
" no reason for giving pain, and yet must see a
" good reason for not giving it. For where there
" is no reason for pain, there is always a good reason
" against it, arising from the nature of the thing
" itself. If it be repugnant to the nature of a ra-
" tional agent to act without reason, as it certainly
" is, how much more repugnant must it be to
" counteract it, and produce an effect so much
" worse than nothing? —— supposing then the
" agent to know what pain is, and likewise that
" the object is a sensible creature, and himself a
" rational one; he must needs perceive an imme-
" diate and glaring disagreement between such
" an action coming from him and such an object.
" If this proposition be not strictly self-evident,
" yet it is easily resolved into such as are so; no-
" thing being capable of a plainer or more familiar
" demonstration. —— Whatever is contrary to the

" nature or truth of things is wrong. — Such an
" action is contrary, &c. — The latter of these
" propoſitions has been juſt now proved. The for-
" mer is ſelf-evident. Whoever allows all contra-
" dictions to truth to be falſe muſt allow all
" counteractions to truth to be wrong. Theſe two
" propoſitions being exactly parallel, muſt either
" be both ſelf-evident, or neither." I have tranſcribed this argument at large, that I might do juſtice to the ſubject; for I never expect to ſee it ſo intelligibly propoſed or ſo well ſupported by any one elſe.

The unfitneſs of action, when a rational agent gives pain to a ſenſible creature, is here made to conſiſt in this — that to do it is always irrational as being either without or contrary to reaſon. — But to act without reaſon is not in all caſes contrary to our duty; all actions are not criminal, where we make a choice without reaſon, where of two things quite indifferent we take one. Who would imagine, that he had incurred any guilt by preferring white wine to red, though nothing but whim had determined him in giving this preference? Who would think it wrong behaviour or a violation of his duty, to get up and walk, when, if it had not been for ſome capricious humour, he might have ſat ſtill? And if in theſe inſtances there is no crime in acting without reaſon, it will be very difficult to tell why the bare want of

of a reason for acting should make our behaviour criminal in any other instances. — It is indeed alledged that *to give pain to a sensible creature is not merely acting without reason but contrary to it; because pain is a natural evil, and is repugnant to the nature of a being, which has perception, and which naturally desires indolence and pleasure, and shuns pain: this therefore is a constant reason against every action, that gives pain; it makes every such action irrational and so unfit for a rational agent, unless a stronger reason intervenes.* — And what is that stronger reason, which may intervene? does it depend upon the interest of the agent? if it does; what advantage is it to the cause of virtue to have made out such an obligation to practise it, as will and ought to have no weight, where it is against a man's interest? to what purpose is it recommended upon such principles as make the difficulties we meet with in being virtuous, not only so many temptations to neglect our duty, but so many reasons for esteeming that behaviour not to be our duty, which would have been so, if those difficulties had not fallen in our way? Or if that stronger reason does not depend upon the interest of the agent; then tell me, why the agent by neglecting to give pleasure to himself or by chusing to give pain to himself does not act as irrationally as by giving pain to others? He has perception as well as they; he desires pleasure and shuns See pag.

ſhuns pain as naturally and as eagerly as they can do: why therefore is not it criminal to do harm to himſelf, though at the ſame time he may be doing good to his fellow-creatures? why is not it a duty to give pain to them, if by that means he can avoid ſuffering it himſelf? Whatever elſe has been urged againſt fitneſs of application, may be uſed with equal evidence againſt all fitneſſes of action, that are imagined to ariſe from it. There is an unfit application made in giving pain to brutes; why then is not this a conſtant reaſon againſt every action, which gives pain to them? why does not it make every ſuch action irrational and ſo unfit for a rational agent? Is it becauſe the uſe we have of them and the advantages we receive from their pain is a ſtronger reaſon, which intervenes? then why is not this reaſon from intereſt, which keeps us clear of any crime in killing or in hurting them, ſufficient to make the ſame behaviour towards our own ſpecies neither irrational nor wrong?

See pag. 128.

But this is not the only weak place in the argument. —*'Tis irrational to give pain becauſe it is contrary to a conſtant reaſon, which ariſes from the averſion that a ſenſible being has to feeling it.* —Now here we muſt obſerve, that no action of a man is called irrational for being contrary to reaſons, that do not affect him and that he is not any ways concerned in. A ſon may have a very

good

good reason for desiring that his father should not marry a second wife; and yet the father's marrying will not be ever the more irrational upon this account. And a sensible being may from its aversion to pain have the strongest reason against feeling it; and yet the giving it not be contrary to the nature of a rational agent; unless this latter had as good a reason for not giving it as the former has for not feeling it. And what reason has he? —— *Why there is a most glaring disagreement between such an action coming from him and such an object.* —— That there is a disagreement between the action and the object is confessed; but our enquiry is, whether there is a disagreement between the action and the agent: for this will be necessary in order to make it wrong or irrational in him to do it. If the disagreement was wholly owing to his being rational, as may possibly be intimated by placing it between such an action *coming from him* and such an object, this would make the argument more plausible: but sure the agent's being rational, which gives the pain, is not what makes a sensible creature have an aversion to feel it: there is the same contrariety between pain and his nature, whatever it arises from; its coming from a rational agent does not occasion a greater dislike to it or make it more disagreeable than it would have been if it had come from a cause without either sense or reason. We may be less afraid of poison than

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of the bite of a mad dog; and perhaps had rather be ſhot through the head than die under the torture of the ſtone. By *the action coming from him*, no more indeed might be meant than ſimply the action, which he does; and then the whole amount of this propoſition will be, that there is a diſagreement between the feeling pain and a ſenſible creature; a truth, which cannot be denied, but which is but little to the purpoſe when a diſagreement was to be ſhewn between the giving pain and the nature of a rational agent. If any thing more was meant by this expreſſion — *a diſagreement between ſuch an action coming from a rational agent and ſuch an object*; — if the very learned author deſigned, that his readers ſhould underſtand by it, that there is not only a diſagreement between the action of a rational agent, which gives pain, and the ſenſible object, which feels it; but that there is beſides a diſagreement between the action and *the coming of it* from ſuch an agent, or that the production of ſuch an action is contrary to the nature of a rational agent; I confeſs that I do not perceive the ſelf-evidence of this propoſition; and the demonſtration, which follows, does not make it much clearer to me. — *Whatever is contrary to the nature or truth of things is wrong.* — If by this be meant that a rational agent behaves wrong, as it ought not, or contrary to its duty, whenever it behaves contrary

to its own nature; nothing is more true: if it means, that every action is wrong, in which things are used otherwise than they are by nature fitted to be used; this may be true too; but then it is not contrary to the nature of things and therefore not wrong nor a breach of duty to give pain to beings, that have sense and perception; because their nature has fitted them for such usage, they are fitted to receive pain as well as pleasure: but if it only means, that every action is wrong which treats any thing otherwise than its nature has made it desire to be treated, we may call this *wrong* if we please; but then we must have a care of being mislead by a small ambiguity in the word: for though it it wrong, it is not necessarily a violation of duty; though it is wrong in respect of the object, it may be otherwise in respect of the agent; though it is naturally wrong, to him who feels it, it may not be morally wrong or criminal in him who does it. The demonstration goes on. —— *Such an action as gives pain to a sensible object is contrary to the nature of things, as has been just proved.* —— But what had been just proved? —— that such an action is contrary to the nature of the sensible being, which feels it, not that it is contrary to the nature of the rational agent, which produces it: for this latter point was to be made good by the demonstration; and no one could think of supporting a step in a demonstration by an appeal to the truth of the

proposition to be demonstrated: either it had not been proved already, or else when he had undertaken to make it more evident by a clear and plain demonstration, he only refers his reader back to the proofs he had given of it before: but this I cannot suspect in so ingenuous a writer; therefore when he says, that he had just proved such an action as gives pain to a sensible object to be contrary to the nature of things, he means that it is contrary to the nature of the object; and this in truth was all that he had proved. And since that only is wrong in such a sense as to be a breach of duty, which is contrary to the nature of the agent; though feeling pain is contrary to the nature of the object, it does not follow that every action is a breach of duty in a rational agent, by which he gives pain to others: to have supported such a conclusion, it ought to have been shewn that it is as contrary to the nature of the agent to give it, as it confessedly is to that of the patient to receive it.

Sometimes this set of moralists seems to have been aware, that fitnesses and unfitnesses, which arise immediately from the nature of things, can only be natural ones, a fitness or unfitness of application; and that none but moral ones, a fitness or unfitness of action, can produce obligation. To avoid this difficulty they observe; that from the nature of things and qualities of persons arise different relations of persons to each other; and that from those diff-

Clarke pag. 1[illegible].

different relations of different persons one to another, there necessarily arises a fitness or unfitness of certain manners of behaviour of some persons towards others. Thus the notion of bounty for instance is wholly different from that of injury and from that of neglect: and the same may be said of the notions of gratitude and ingratitude, no man, who has common sense, can mistake one for the other: and from this natural difference there is said to arise a fitness between the notions of bounty and gratitude, an unfitness between those of bounty and ingratitude: bounty and gratitude tally to each other with great exactness, bounty and ingratitude or even indifference are quite incongruous or unsuitable to each other. Balguy. pag. 109. &c.

But it is not the agreement between the notions of bounty and gratitude, which obliges us to be grateful: for if nothing else was taken into the account to make out an obligation; wherever we observe bounty, whether we had been the objects of it or no, we should be obliged to gratitude; but this we are not, till we have received favours ourselves. What therefore is there particular in these circumstances, which obliges us? certainly not the fitness or congruity between the notions of gratitude and bounty; for then we should have been as much obliged to be grateful towards the benefactor of another person as towards our own, since the fitness of these two notions to each other would be

the same in both cases. If any fitness obliges me to be grateful, when I have received a favour; as it cannot be a general one between the very notions of bounty and gratitude; it must be an agreement between my behaviour to the circumstances I am in, a fitness of my behaviour to the relation I stand in to my benefactor.—From hence it would follow, that every behaviour, which is expressive of the relations we bear, must be our duty: for if the agreement of our behaviour to the relations we stand in to other people was not only the mark and characteristic of what we are obliged to, but was besides the very cause of obligation; if this agreement was the true reason why our behaviour is fit and right; then it must in every instance be fit and right to act agreeably to our relations and wrong to counteract them; it must be a duty to express them in our conduct and a crime to do otherwise. But the relation between a tyrant and his vassals is as clear as that between a king and his subjects, and either of them are such as may be expressed by behaviour. Is it therefore the duty of a tyrant to behave like a tyrant? if it is, then relations may indeed oblige, but they oblige to vice as much as to virtue; if it is not, then there may be a fitness between behaviour and character, or behaviour may be agreeable to relations and yet at the same time be wrong: and therefore fit in this sense does not mean the same as right, and it would be a false

false conclusion, that an action is right, because it has this fitness or is expressive of the character and relation of him, who does it. But this is not the only sense of the word fit, when applied to behaviour: it sometimes may signify the same as decent or proper, and then it scarce differs at all from the notion of reasonable or right. This ambiguous use of the same word not sufficiently attended to has occasioned some confusion and perplexity.——Gratitude, says the moralist, is the fittest behaviour for one, who has been obliged.—The reader owns it.—— He goes on. —— Whatever is fit is also reasonable and right. —— This too is acknowledged: and yet the conclusion —— Therefore gratitude a duty —— is not so readily agreed to. For the word *fit* is here used in two different and unconnected significations. When the question is,—why is gratitude a duty?—and the argument to prove that it is, begins thus; —— *Gratitude is the fittest behaviour for one, who has been obliged*; —*fittest* must here mean most expressive of the relation, which the person, who has received a favour, stands in to his benefactor: for if it meant *most reasonable, most right or most agreeable to duty*, this would be taking for granted in the first step of the argument the very thing to be proved: and the conclusion, that gratitude is a duty because it is fit, would amount to this only, that gratitude is a duty because it is a duty. When the

the moralist proceeds to affirm,——*that whatever is fit is reasonable and right*;——if he means the same by *fit* that he did before, his assertion is not
e pag. 140. true; since our behaviour may be expressive of a relation without being right or reasonable: if he means any thing else, if he uses the word *fit* in a very common acceptation of it for decent or proper, then indeed the truth of what he asserts is self-evident, but is nothing to the purpose: the logicians would tell him, that his syllogism has four terms in it and so is inclusive. For how does it follow that gratitude is a duty, because it is fit and right only in one sense, when what is a duty is fit and right only in another? if either gratitude was self-evidently decent and proper, right and reasonable; or if whatever behaviour is conformable to any relation that we bear to mankind was apparently a duty; then and not till then the conclusion would be rightly made: but the former of these is the very point in question; the latter has been shewn not to be true.

To reply here that such relations as are expressed by vices, ought not to be engaged in, is giving up the cause: for if a man may engage in the relation of person obliged and benefactor, but may not engage in some others, that might be named; the notion of crime and duty must be previous to these relations and so cannot be owing to them. And indeed upon enquiry it would

would appear, that in the judgment of mankind, we behave as we ought, when we comply with those relations, by the observance of which we do good or avoid doing harm; and that we violate our duty in neglecting these, or in forming our behaviour upon such as are of an opposite nature. And thus after all, which these relations teach us, the *great question is still unanswered.——Why are we obliged to be virtuous? why is it our duty to do good and to avoid doing harm?*—— If a man asks what his duty is, who knows beforehand, that virtue in general is; he should be directed to consider what character he bears, and what station of life he is in: that is, he should inform himself, what opportunities of doing good he has, and what particular good his circumstances point out to him to be done. Here all his different relations are to be examined: as a father he does good by taking care of his children; as a governour, by protecting those, who are under his authority; if he has received favours, gratitude to his benefactor is the properest return of good; if he has favours to bestow, he will do more good by bestowing them upon the indigent than upon those, who have no occasion for his assistance. To instruct him in these particulars is the business of the casuist, whose province supposes us to know already that virtue is our duty; for he only shews us *what* we are obliged to by point-
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ing out to us what virtue is in our circumſtances; what are the opportunities we have of practiſing it; or what the inſtances, in which we may practiſe it moſt ſucceſsfully. But if we go a ſtep farther, and ask, *why* is all this our duty? he muſt ſend us to the moraliſts for information: it is their buſineſs to ſettle the obligations of virtue; it was his to particulariſe thoſe obligations by drawing the general notion of virtue out into rules for real life: they are to tell us, *why* we ought to do all that good, which our different relations, and the different qualifications of the perſons we are concerned with give us an opportunity of doing; he from conſidering theſe differences was to ſhew us, *what* that good is. And if they only examine our relations inſtead of aſcertaining the reaſons for complying with them; they miſtake their province: if when we ask, why virtue is our duty; they anſwer by telling us what virtue is to men in our circumſtances, and how we may practiſe it; they miſtake the queſtion.

It may not be amiſs to take notice here that, when I ſay the relations that we bear to thoſe about us will teach us what virtue is to men in our circumſtances, I do not mean, that any ſort of relations are the mark or characteriſtic of virtue; but only that from a view of our ſeveral relations we may learn how to practice virtue; that is, from knowing what opportunities we have of doing good,

See pag.12. 3.&c.

good, we may see how it is to be done in the best and most effectual manner.

One instance, which is frequently urged on the other side with a very plausible appearance, may perhaps upon examination lead us to the true reason why we are obliged to act up to any sort of character or relations whatsoever. "That God is "infinitely superiour to men; is as clear, as that "infinity is larger than a point, or eternity longer "than a moment." — Here is a difference in things indeed, but it is one from whence no obligation arises to honour and obey God: for if so; *man, who is made a little lower than the angels*, should honour and obey them too. It is true, he would not upon these principles owe them so universal and unlimited an obedience as is due to the Supreme Being, because they are not so far above him: but if infinite superiority was all, that gave God a claim to unlimited worship, then every degree of it would give a claim to some subordinate degrees of adoration. The Romanists it may be, would not give up any opinion because it was attended with this consequence: though the more intelligent [illegible] of them would rather deduce our obligation to this service from the office of angels, from their being ministering spirits, which protect us and advance our good, than from any superiority of their nature above ours. But to say the truth; these moralists themselves do not think that this is God's

Clarke pag 175.

Bellarm. de cult. sanct. sup. psal. xc.

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title to our worſhip and obedience: they deduce our obligation to honour him from a difference, not between one thing and another, but between one ſort of behaviour and another; from a fitneſs of one ſort of behaviour to expreſs the relation that we bear to God, and an unfitneſs of the oppoſite:
Clarke ib. for their argument proceeds in this manner. ——
“ It is as certainly fit that men ſhould honour and
“ worſhip, obey and imitate God, rather than on
“ the contrary in all their actions endeavour to
“ diſhonour and diſobey him; as 'tis certainly
“ true, that they have an entire dependence on
“ him, and he on the contrary can in no reſpect
“ receive any advantage from them; and not only
“ ſo, but alſo that his will is as certainly and un-
“ alterably juſt and equitable in giving his com-
“ mands as his power is irreſiſtible in requiring
“ ſubmiſſion to it.”——The fitneſs therefore of worſhiping God is owing to our dependence upon him and to the juſtice and equity of his commands. But what does the fitneſs of this behaviour conſiſt in? if only in its being expreſſive of the relation between the creature and the creator, ſuch a fitneſs has been ſhewn in other inſtances to produce no obligation; and in this inſtance it will appear ſo to as great advantage as in any of
Epiphan. adverſ. hæreſ. pag. 625. the reſt. For would not this relation ſubſiſt as well between the evil principle of the Manichees and his creatures as between the good and gracious

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God of the Christians and his? and would not this behaviour be expressive of this relation in either case and therefore have the same fitness in one that it has in the other? And yet very few can think it a duty to worship a malevolent creator: they in particular certainly thought otherwise, who to make out the duty of worship added the consideration of God's commands being just and equitable to that of our dependence upon him. Had the latter alone been sufficient to produce an obligation, why should the former be taken in? if every fitness of behaviour to express a relation makes a duty, and if worship is expressive of our dependence upon God for our existence, or of the relation between creature and its creator; why is not it a duty to worship our creator, whether he is just and good or unjust and cruel? Will nothing but benevolence in him give our worship such a fitness as to make it a duty? then fit behaviour in one sense differs from fit behaviour in another sense; that behaviour, which has in it conformity to relations, is not always decent, proper, and right. But does not this very instance shew us what makes an action fit in such a manner as to be proper and right? —— *'Tis fit to honour and obey a benevolent creator only.* —— And what is a benevolent creator? is not it such an one as provides for the good and happiness of his creatures? therefore as far as we are persuaded, that it will be the bet-

ter for us to obey such a master, so far it is fit or proper, so far it is right and our duty to obey him: since, upon any other supposition, benevolence in the creator could never make such a difference in his character as to oblige us to worship him, if he is benevolent, but to leave us at liberty or rather to oblige us to the contrary, if he is not so.

I shall trouble the reader with examining only one more of their arguments: but it is one, which has as many ambiguities in it as any they make use of. They say, "that the same reason of things, "with regard to which the will of God always "and necessarily *does* determine itself, to chuse to "act only what is agreeable to justice, equity, "goodness, and truth, in order to the welfare of "the whole universe; *ought* likewise constantly "to determine the wills of all subordinate ratio- "nal beings, to govern all their actions by the "same rules, for the good of the public in their "respective stations." Here seems to have been a designed opposition between *does* and *ought*: and if there was; no more may be meant, but that man from the established laws of nature or common administrations of providence, by observing how they are adapted to advance the good and secure the happiness of all intelligent and sensible beings, may learn what he ought to do, even without seeing why God acts in this manner. But what obliges us to make that the rule of our actions,

Clarke pag. 174.

actions which God has been pleased to make the rule of his? why is it our duty to follow the same law, *that he from the beginning hath set himself to work by*, if the reason of that law should either be unknown to us, or be such as we are no way concerned in? Will the authority of his example, though we do not know either that he expects us to imitate it or designs to make us happy for so doing, be a motive sufficient of itself to influence our behaviour and engage us to make it conformable to this pattern? This is putting obligation upon a very different footing from what was intended; it is deducing it from the authority of God's example, not from the reasons and relations of things. And indeed unless these reasons and relations are otherwise explained than we commonly find them, it will be difficult to shew that our behaviour is even agreeable to them, when we practise the virtue of benevolence, in imitation of the goodness of God: for if the notion of a creator is different from that of a creature, and the relations between a creature and its creator different from those between beings of the same kind, the same conduct cannot well suit with both characters or be expressive of relations so very unlike. If doing good or communicating happiness to his creatures suits both with the notion of a creator and with the relation subsisting between him and them; one would think that the same behaviour could not

Hooker B. I. c. 2.

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express the character of a creature and the relation which he bears to those of his own species. Our fellow-creatures may desire as strongly that we should make them happy as that their creator should make them so: but it is not a fitness of our behaviour to their wishes, which makes it proper and right for us; if it was any fitness at all that could make it our duty, it must be a fitness of it to our own circumstances and to the relation that we stand in to them. When we are sure upon other principles, that we ought to do good, then the example of God is of singular use in the conduct of our lives: we may see in that, what good is to be done, how we may do it, and to
Matth. v. 48. whom: this is what Christ meant by the precept of being *perfect as our father which is in heaven, is perfect*: he did not intend to teach his disciples why they are to be kind, but to shew them what it is to be kind; to give them the rules of duty, not to explain the cause of it; to instruct them in the proper extent of charity, not in the reasons of its obligation.

But here it may be asked, whether we can ever be at a loss about the reasons, which influence
Clarke's the divine conduct: that which is most agreeable
pag. 111. 184. to goodness, justice and truth is fittest and best to be done; and the will of God, being under the guidance of infinite wisdom cannot but chuse what is fittest and best. And though our wisdom falls

falls short of his; yet, as far as it extends, we cannot but chuse in the same manner, if we obey its dictates; and the more constant and uniform we are in making choice of what is fittest and best, the more reasonably we act, the more like we are to God, and the more we advance our own perfection. —— That God should govern the world by the rules of justice, goodness and truth is without all dispute most agreeable to the nature of his creatures; it is what they have most reason to desire, and therefore may in respect of them be called best and fittest: but as far as infinite wisdom is concerned in the guidance of his will, he must be unerringly directed to do what is best and fittest for him to do, or what is most agreeable to his own nature. So that after all, this question remains to be determined. —— *Is it most agreeable to the nature of God to do that, which it is most agreeable to the nature of his creatures to desire he should do?* —— If he is a a benevolent being, it is; if he is a malevolent one, it is not: and thus what is called a demonstration of the goodness of God, has, from an ambiguity in the words *best and fittest*, the appearance of one; but leaves us just where we set out, and teaches us no more than this, —— that his wisdom will direct him to act according to the rules of goodness, if he is good, but to act otherwise, if he is not. —— And if we do not know what infinite wisdom can discover in doing good,

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which ſhould make it beſt and fitteſt for the doer of it; however ſure we may be that it is beſt and fitteſt for the infinitely wiſe God by ſeeing that he always does good, however ſure we may be by what we feel in ourſelves that it is beſt and fitteſt for thoſe, to whom it is done; yet when out of duty we imitate God, we are virtuous upon no other principles but thoſe of an implicit conformity to his example. This, if he does not require it, would be no better than enthuſiaſm in us: if he does require it, but does not deſign to make us happy for obeying his authority, it would be tyranny in him: but if he does both expect it and intend to reward us for it, then is it the very principle of duty that I would endeavour to eſtabliſh.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

No obligation to virtue unleſs it makes us happy. Every man's own happineſs is the end, which nature teaches him to purſue.

THE true cauſe of moral obligation muſt be ſomething, which gives us an undoubted aſſurance, that by being virtuous we cannot fail of being happy. For whether we follow nature as it appears in the behaviour of mankind in general, or attend to the dictates of reaſon as they are preſented in the writings of philoſophers; our See p. 70. 71. own happineſs is what we muſt prefer to every thing elſe, and therefore is the only end, which we are likely to purſue with ſteadineſs and conſtancy. Virtue if it ſhould interfere with this end would ſoon be deſerted; or, if it had no relation at all to our own good, would be indifferent to ourſelves, whatever it might be to other people. It might by chance be ſought after and embraced; but a purſuit, which is engaged in upon ſlight or no motives, will never be uniformly carried on and will ſoon be wholly dropped again. In one ſenſe indeed virtue cannot be indifferent; it will always remain diſtinct from vice whatever becomes of its votaries; and that behaviour, which does

good to mankind, will not only be different from that, which does harm, but will always be the best for those, who feel its influence, though the virtuous in the mean time are miserable. But if our own happiness is the most natural and the most rational end of our actions, then virtue, before we can be obliged to practise it, must be the best for its votaries too and must make them happy.

There is in all of us a great unwillingness to confess that the principal end, which we have in view, is to make ourselves happy. Till a man understands, that the real good of each particular person is by some means or other so closely connected with that of all mankind as to make it impossible for him to promote his own welfare without having a proper tenderness for theirs, he will think it his business to profess himself quite disinterested: for to have any regard to his own happiness is in his opinion to set up a different interest from the rest of the world; and he is afraid that, if the people about him were to suspect him of this, they would use him accordingly.

Many have indeed a more comprehensive view of things, and know, that they cannot be happy themselves, unless they endeavour to make others so too. But the short-sighted and inattentive are the majority: and as these are persuaded, that whoever has any view to his own happiness must be negligent of theirs; they never fail to discountenance

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in others what they diſown in themſelves, and to repreſent all private regards as deſtructive of true worth, below the dignity of human nature, and what a man ought to bluſh at.

Thus all mankind, whether their ſcheme of happineſs is really ſuch as cannot be purſued without hurting others, or ſuch as can never be brought to perfection without doing all the good in their power, the truly ſelfiſh and the rationally benevolent are taught alike either by fear or ſhame to conceal the motives, which influence their behaviour, and to deny that they have any deſign of promoting their own happineſs at all. The wretch, who, to pleaſe a fooliſh and ſordid appetite of his own and to ſatisfy an unnatural and ridiculous deſire of money, will not allow himſelf the common neceſſaries of life, would chuſe to have it thought that he is labouring all the while for the good of his family. The ſoldier pretends, that he hazards his life for the defence of his country; though every body knows, that he has nothing ſo much at heart as the raiſing his own fortune. The ſtateſman talks of ſerving the public; whilſt he is doing what in any other ſtation of life he muſt plainly ſee would be only ſerving himſelf. The man of pleaſure indeed cannot ſay, that he has no regard to himſelf in the diſtinguiſhing part of his character: but then he endeavours to make amends for this by being always one of the forwardeſt to aſſure

you, that he is a man of honour, and that rather than hurt any one breathing he would forfeit all that is dear to him. The votaries of virtue too are unwilling to confess that they ever concern themselves about the rewards, which attend it: the beautiful, the fit, and the right is what they are enamoured with; and any thing else is quite indifferent to them. Nay even the Christian would seem to worship God upon better principles than God himself has been pleased to suggest; and
Matth. VI. 20. though, if he would obey the command and im-
Heb. XII. 1. 2. itate the example of his Master, he ought to set his affections on the joys of heaven; yet he will not own, that he acts upon any other motive besides the disinterested love of his Creator.

But no artifice or pretence can hide the true principle of human actions. There is indeed the appearance of great variety in the pursuits of mankind: one is fond of power, another of riches: some have no taste for any thing but the pleasures of sense; whilst others seem to have a sort of relish for doing good: the vain man never extends his views beyond popular applause; the enthusiast talks of nothing but he knows not what enjoyment of God; whilst the wiser and calmer Christian desires to be with his Master *in those mansions, which he has prepared for him.* But in all this and a much greater variety the general aim is happiness: different means are used, but the end is the same;
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different objects are made choice of, but they are all chosen for the same reason; because they suit with our temper, that is, with our inclinations. And since our temper, as long as it lasts, is our constitution, to humour it is making our condition as agreeable as we can to what we take to be our nature; and this, if any thing, is endeavouring to be happy.

We talk of crossing our appetites, and of disappointing our inclinations; and sometimes we do cross them; the good and the virtuous do it frequently. But what do we mean by crossing them? it is not chusing what can give us no satisfaction and parting with all, that could give us any: it is only sacrificing a desire, that is immediate and pressing, to one, that we are assured will be felt some time hence; it is giving up a present gratification, because it would hurt us in the end: or parting with something, which we should like very well now, because it is inconsistent with something else, which we should like better at another time. When the Christian relinquishes any enjoyment, that he is fond of, for the sake of heaven; he does it, because he is fonder of this. And whatever we may think of the disinterested Stoic, yet unless he has a taste for the beauty of virtue, unless his inclinations have taken such a turn as to make it a part of his constitution to admire her charms above any thing besides and even

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to think it impoſſible to be happy but in the enjoyment of them, they will not be able to engage him to mortify one luſt or to reſtrain one favourite paſſion.

We ſeem to ſtand out the moſt againſt our inclinations and to act the moſt in opoſition to them in learning the art of contentedneſs. And yet what we do even in this inſtance is not dropping the purſuit of happineſs, but carrying it on in the moſt effectual manner. For to be contented is not to give up all endeavours after what appears agreeable to our nature; it is not to ſet ſtill and acquieſce in our preſent condition without ſo much as feeling a wiſh to improve it though we had it in our

Fab. of bees V. 1. pag. 17. 67. 272. power. For whatever notion ſome few may ha of contentedneſs, we ſeem in general to be agreed, that at leaſt it is not inconſiſtent with the practice of virtue: and for my own part, I cannot be per-

Philip. IV. 11. ſuaded, that St. Paul would approve either in him-

Heb. XIII. 5. ſelf or in others any diſpoſition of mind but ſuch as the beſt morality may recommend and the beſt friends to mankind may encourage. But this indolent temper, careleſs about what may happen and inſenſible to all enjoyments, which do not force themſelves upon us, will weaken all the ſprings of action, and will leave us no motives or but very feint ones for engaging in ſome of the nobleſt purpoſes of living. What ſhould call a man of abilities for ſerving the public from his eaſe and retirement;

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if he was quite regardless of any good, which he might obtain for himself, and was quite a stranger to every desire of making his own condition better? what should keep him steady in using his abilities to the advantage of mankind, when authority and power are put into his hands; if he is unconcerned about any disgrace, which he may suffer for the contrary behaviour, and is so little moved by any misfortunes, that may befall him, as scarce to give himself the trouble of thinking whether they might not be avoided? Would the desire of having frequent opportunities of doing good, though unenlivened by any hopes of making himself happier, have vigour enough either to put him at first upon improving his condition or to support him afterwards against the difficulties he must meet with in attempting it? would the warmer desire of a future reward come in to his assistance, where the other failed, and his eager wishes for happiness in a life to come engage him to promote the welfare of mankind whilst he continues here? —— But we cannot be so much interested in favour even of other men, as to be active in serving them and diligent to make our influence as extensive and our opportunities of doing good as frequent as possible, without feeling some uneasiness, when we are disappointed, and anxiety enough at all times about the success of our endeavours to break in upon that calm and indolent repose, which has been

been mistaken for contentedness. So that to desire the improvement of our condition though for the sake of others is as inconsistent with the common notion of this virtue, as if we had desired it wholly upon our own account. And sure it is not possible for St. Paul to mean that he was not desirous of any absent enjoyment nor concerned about obtaining any, when he says, *that he had learned in whatsoever state he was, therewith to be content*: for with this temper about him he could not have *desired to depart and to be with Christ*: it must have suppressed every inclination to make his condition better, and have stifled every wish to change it though for the joys of heaven.

Philip IV. 11.

Philip. I. 23.

Let us therefore consider how we would reconcile any earnest endeavours to enlarge our opportunities of doing good or any longings after the happiness of another life with the habit of contentedness; and perhaps this enquiry may lead us to the true notion of that temper. It is inconsistent with the contented man's character to set his heart upon raising his fortune and to employ all his thoughts in contriving how to effect it: and why is it less so *to hunger and thirst after righteousness* and to have all his affections engaged by virtue? These two desires may be equal in degree; and then what is it, which makes the difference between them? There is indeed this obvious difference; that one of them cannot but be virtuous, the

Math. v. 6.

the other is at beſt only not vicious. But this does not ſatisfy the enquiry, which is not —— *Why one deſire is more vicious than the other*: but —— *why one ſhould be more conſiſtent with contentedneſs than the other.* The only difference, beſides that juſt mentioned, is, that one of theſe deſires may be diſappointed and the other cannot. For when a man has exerted his beſt and ſincereſt endeavours; though the event ſhould not exactly anſwer his expectations, nor he be able to do that ſervice to mankind which he intended; yet, as theſe endeavours alone are virtuous, he will be ſure to obtain what he deſired: he wanted to be virtuous, and he is ſo; ſometimes perhaps not in ſuch a manner as he could have wiſhed, but always in ſuch a manner as to make him eaſy. Why is the contented temper leſs in danger by having the moſt warm regard for *things above* and by *laying* Col. iii. 2.
up our treaſure in heaven, than it would have Matt. vi.
been, if we had *ſet our affections on things on the* 19. 20.
earth, and had *laid up our treaſure here?* The ſame Divine Inſtructor, who adviſed us what to purſue, has given us the reaſon: —— becauſe upon earth the *ruſt and moth may corrupt or thieves may* ibid.
break through and ſteal; but our heavenly treaſure is not expoſed to any of theſe accidents; ſo that we cannot indulge our wiſhes after this too much, ſince we may be ſure of all poſſible ſucceſs, as the purſuit is not uncertain nor the enjoyment precarious.

From these two instances we may see that contentedness does not consist in divesting ourselves of all inclinations for what we do not enjoy at present; but in not indulging any beyond the probability of success: it does not forbid us making use of all our endeavours to preserve any happiness, that we are possessed of; but keeps us from being too fond of any, that we are in danger of losing: contentedness does not tye us down to our present condition; but prepares us, if it is a good one, for all the changes, that may happen in it; and teaches us, if it is a bad one, to bear it well as long as it lasts. What therefore is it, but the restraining such appetites as would hurt us, if they were indulged? what is it but the best security against disappointments and uneasiness? what, but the pursuit of happiness by the most cautious steps? For, since happiness is what we feel, when our condition is agreeable to our nature, the surest way to be happy is to improve our condition and suit it to our humour, where we can; but to acquire such a temper, where we cannot, as is always ready to submit and bend itself to those circumstances, which we find it is not in our power to alter. And as nothing but [a] contentedness can

[a] What we now call *contentedness* is one part of what the antient moralists called *fortitude*. Omnino fortis animus, et magnus, duabus rebus maxime cernitur: quarum una in rerum externarum despicientia ponitur, cum persuasum sit, nihil hominem, nisi quod honestum, decorumque sit, aut admirari, aut optare, aut expetere oportere: nulli-

prevent much uſeleſs and unprofitable anxiety, which we muſt have felt without it; if our averſion to evil may be called an inclination as well as our deſire of good, to be contented does not conſiſt in croſſing our inclinations, but in following thoſe, which muſt be taken care of firſt, if we would be happy.

Beſides what we may gather from the conſtant behaviour of mankind in general; there is ſomething very like an univerſal conſent that the principal point, which every one has in view, is his own happineſs. We ſee this plain enough in other men; and, becauſe we are afraid, that too

nullique neque homini neque perturbationi animi, nec fortunae ſuccumbere. Nam et ea, quae eximia pleriſque et praeclara videntur, parva ducere: eaque ratione ſtabili firmaque contemnere fortis animi, magnique ducendum eſt: et ea, quae videntur acerba, quae multa et varia in hominum vita fortunaque verſantur, ita ferre, ut nihil a ſtatu naturae diſcedas, nihil a dignitate ſapientis, robuſti animi eſt, magnaeque conſtantiae.—Vacandum autem eſt omni animi perturbatione, tum cupiditate, et metu, tum etiam aegritudine, et voluptate animi, et iracundia, ut tranquillitas et ſecuritas adſit, quae adfert cum conſtantiam, tum etiam dignitatem. The ſame author deſcribes too what is frequently miſtaken for the only art of contentedneſs. Multi autem et ſunt, et fuerunt; qui eam, quam dico, tranquillitatem expetentes a negotiis publicis ſe removerint, ad otiumque perfugerint. Cic. de offic. l. 1. 20. This is one way of being contented; and may be the eaſieſt: but neither St. Paul nor Cicero eſteemed it the beſt. The Apoſtle inſtructs his followers not to be ſlothful in buſineſs. Rom. XII. 11. And the philoſopher ſays: facilior, tutior, et minus aliis gravis, aut moleſta vita eſt otioſorum, fructuoſior autem hominum generi, et ad claritatem, amplitudinemque aptior eorum, qui ſe ad rempub. et ad res magnas gerendas accommodaverunt. De offic. l. 1. 21.

 close

close an attachment to their own interests may make them regardless of ours. we are apt to complain, that all the world have nothing at heart but their own advantage. But then the rest of the world see as plainly that we have the same designs and complain of it too in their turn. And thus each party discovers in the other what neither of them would care to own of themselves: and the united testimony of both together seems to be nothing less than the common voice of mankind.

When I say that all men pursue happiness, I only mean, that all men endeavour to be happy, or pursue what they think is happiness; for every day's experience must shew us, that the generality of the world are at much pains and trouble to obtain what will give them but little satisfaction, when they have got possession of it. Sometimes they raise inclinations in themselves, which nature never gave them; and so place their happiness in what must necessarily disappoint them: for desires, that are unnatural and taken up by chance, cannot possibly last: a constitution, that we make for ourselves, will be of short continuance. Age, caprice, other engagements, a new turn of life and conversation, any of these will introduce a different relish and then the short-lived good expires. And when we design to proceed with more caution and to consult nature in the choice of good; when we attend to no desires, but such as are really

parts

parts of the human constitution; yet how seldom with all our caution do we take into our scheme of happiness all the desires that are parts of it? The common mistake is, that no sort of provision is made for satisfying any wants but those we feel at present: and thus, as others, which are no less natural than these, begin to appear and to be pressing, we find ourselves at a loss, and, till we have corrected our first design, are obliged to bear all the anxiety of feeling wants, that we were not prepared for and therefore cannot supply. And as all the corrections which we make when reduced to these circumstances will be made in a hurry; there is great hazard of our going on with a scheme as imperfect as that we set out upon; of our overlooking many things, which ought to be taken into the account; and of our making no more provision than we did before for many unavoidable changes in our condition, such as a man must always be sure to take some care about, or else his life will be a constant scene of disappointments and uneasiness.

But when either desires, that were of our own raising, die away, and new ones, that are taken up with as little reason, succeed in their place; or when such as we had neglected grow importunate, and force us to enlarge our plan or to change it; when they, who once thought, that they admired nothing but the charms of virtue grow fond by de-

degrees of popular applause, and court, what they once so much despised, the favour and esteem of the world; when the conqueror amidst all his triumphs suspends for a while his thirst of glory and gives himself up to ease and pleasure; when the phlegmatic usurer drops his low pursuit, and engages with the rapturous enthusiast in one, that appears to be much more exalted; in such instances as these, the alterations, that are made in the plan, shew indeed that it was imperfect before, that either it had provided nothing firm and lasting to build upon, or had taken in too contracted a prospect: but they discover at the same time what is the principal end, which mankind have most at heart: for no corrections are ever thought of, till the first design, commonly by experience though sometimes by reason, is found insufficient to produce the self-good that was expected from it; and none are ever made, whether they are prudent and deliberate or capricious and accidental, but what have a view to render it more useful to the purposes of private happiness.

Upon the whole therefore we may observe, that *in the question relating to the ultimate end of action, there are two distinct enquiries.* The first is, —— *whether private happiness and self-good be that end.* The other —— *where this self-good is to be found*; or in what the true and real happiness of man consists. In settling the latter of these we have

have nothing, which looks like universal consent, and can make but little use of the conduct of mankind. For here they agree in nothing but in being in the wrong: their frequent disappointments and their changeful behaviour demonstrate that they are so, and that their schemes of happiness are ill-concerted and unnatural. But when amidst all these changes the pursuit of happiness is never dropped; when, after they have courted it in a thousand shapes and have found that it flies from them in all, they still persevere and, whatever they may have met with in former tryals, never despair of better success in the next; they must in this instance be under the conduct and direction of nature: because a continued series of disappointments could not but have discouraged them, if they had followed any other guide.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Every man's own happiness is the ultimate end, which reason teaches him to pursue.

THE genuine dictates of real and unprejudiced nature can differ nothing from those of right reason; one will necessarily approve what the other suggests. For what can reason point out as the ultimate end of action to be chosen and pursued in preference to all things else, but that, which is of all things the most desireable? and what can be more desireable than to be placed in such a condition as is agreeable to our nature? Reason therefore as well as nature teaches us to make this our principal aim; and this is no more than a description of what in one word is called happiness.

But as we appealed before to the behaviour and confession of mankind in general for the dictates of nature, so here we may to the authority of the philosophers, the wiser and more penetrating part of mankind, for the voice of reason. And they, we shall find, after the most exact researches into human nature agree in making happiness or self-good the ultimate end of action.

There

[a] There was indeed one inexhaustible fund of controversy, which divided them into many different sects: I mean the enquiry — *where the sovereign good may be found or wherein the principal happiness of man consists.* — Endless disputes were raised upon this head; and each party of philosophers endeavoured to make their own relish universal and to bring the rest of the world over to their side. But however they might be divided about this point; those, who maintained virtue to be the greatest good, and those, who thought they had done but little unless they had proved it to be the only good; those, who esteemed nothing so desireable as the pleasures of sense, and those, who acquiesced in freedom from pain; all this variety of sects, and all, that were formed by uniting two or more of these opinions together, seem after the nicest refinements and amidst all their disputes to agree upon it as a thing self-evident and indisputable, that *the sovereign good is the principal point in view, or the last end of action.*

[a] Constitit autem fere inter omnes, id, in quo prudentia versaretur, et quod assequi vellet, aptum et accommodatum naturae esse oportere, et tale ut ipsum per se invitaret, et alliceret adpetitum animi, quem ὁρμὴν Graeci vocant. Quid autem sit, quod ita moveat, itaque a natura in primo ortu adpetatur, non constat; deque eo est inter philosophos, cum summum bonum exquiritur, omnis dissensio. totius enim quaestionis ejus, quae habetur de finibus bonorum et malorum, [cum quaeritur, in his quid sit extremum et ultimum] fons reperiendus est in quo sint prima invitamenta naturae: quo invento, omnis ab eo quasi capite, de summo bono et malo disputatio ducitur. Cic. de fin. l. 5. 6.

The only doubt, which can possibly arise here, is whether all of them by good meant happiness or self-good. And there does not appear to be any room for questioning this, except in the school of the *Stoics*. For as this sect placed the only good in virtue, and very few have a taste exalted enough to perceive what they either did perceive or thought they did, — *that virtue and happiness are the same thing*, — we are apt to suppose, that by the good, which they pretended to find in virtue, they meant something different from happiness; something, that makes it, not good for him who practises it, but good in itself; some most excellent and admirable property, which has no relation at all to the virtuous man's own condition, nor affects him any otherwise than by challenging his love and esteem.

But the Stoic in Cicero does not seem to have been aware of any[b] such notion of good, when he affirms, — that unless it can be proved, that virtue "is the only good, it will be impossible to prove, "that the practice of it is sufficient to make life "happy: and if this was the case, there could in "his opinion be no reason for applying ourselves "to the study of philosophy: since if a wise man

[b] Nam si hoc non obtineatur, id solum bonum esse, quod honestum sit; nullo modo probari possit, beatam vitam virtute effici: quod si ita sit, cur opera philosophiae sit danda, nescio: si enim sapiens aliquis miser esse possit, nae ego istam gloriosam memorabilemque virtutem non magno aestimandam putem. Cic. de fin. l. 3. 3.

"that

" (that is, in their language a virtuous man) can " be miſerable, virtue with all its high titles and re- " putation would not be worth our notice." But a good, which has no relation at all to happineſs, may or may not belong to virtue without affecting the favourite concluſion, of the Stoics, — that virtue is ſufficient of itſelf to make life happy. — For is it poſſible, that the ſeat of happineſs ſhould be fixed by ſuch a good as this? can the virtuous be the more miſerable for wanting it, or the leſs miſerable for being poſſeſſed of it? or can it be thought, that the Stoics would call virtue the only good on account of ſome intrinſic excellence in it, which is quite foreign to the virtuous man's own perſon; and yet allow at the ſame time, that it has nothing to recommend it to our eſteem, if its votaries can be miſerable? This would be to ſuppoſe, that the only good is made deſireable by ſomething elſe, which is not good at all; and that the ultimate end, the laſt point in view, is referred to ſome other point that lies beyond it. But whatever inconſiſtencies one ſect of philoſophers might charge the reſt with, none of them ever charge the Stoics with this.

Perhaps it may not appear neceſſary to ſuppoſe, that Cato, who perſonates the Stoic in this place, ſhould be very exact in repreſenting the opinion of his own ſchool in the paſſage referred to above. For what he ſays, before he has profeſſedly under-

taken to explain this opinion, may possibly be thought to have more of the magnificence of an orator in it, than of the accuracy of a philosopher. [c] Cicero had indeed charged him with something like this just before. But if the Stoics when they say, that virtue is the only good, mean any thing by good but self-good or happiness; we must have a very low opinion of Cato as an orator, if we can suspect that he is attempting to recommend virtue in this character, when he affirms, that it would not be worth our notice, if a virtuous man could be miserable. The philosopher, who is imagined to bid us pursue it as our only good whether it makes us happy or no, would speak of it in higher terms and with a warmer affection than the orator, who represents it as of no value, if we could be miserable whilst engaged in the practice of it.

But the Stoical definitions of good will shew us, that Cato does truly represent the sentiments of his own sect, and that the followers of Zeno, when they call virtue the only good, mean that it is the only self-good or only happiness. For some of them define [d] *good* to be *that, which is naturally desireable:* others; *that, which is agreeable to nature:* and if we were to be asked what we mean by the word happiness, we should explain ourselves in the

[c] Dicuntur Cato, ista magnifice.

[d] Bonum est, quod ad se impetum animi secundum naturam movet. —Bonum est, quod secundum naturam est. Senec. epist. 118.

same

same manner. "That, according to Cicero, is to "be called good, which is naturally desireable, or "does good, or affords satisfaction, or is agreeable "to the inclination." He was indeed here giving a definition of good for the Epicurean, against whom he was to dispute. But this makes it the more likely, that he should give such a general one as all parties were agreed in. And though he does not himself dispute in the person of a Stoic, so that neither of the parties were of this sect: yet as Diogenes the Stoic in his definition of good, when he places it in natural perfection and makes happiness to be the feeling, which results from it, differs so little from Cicero's account of the matter; we have reason to believe that he designed this definition for a comprehensive one, which the school of Zeno, as well as those of the other philosophers, would acquiesce in. And Plutarch affirms, [g] "that all mankind were agreed to esteem that

[e] Bonum ipsum etiam quid esset, fortasse, si opus fuisset, definisses, aut quod esset natura adpetendum, aut quod prodesset, aut quod juvaret, aut quod liberet. Cic. de fin. l. 2. 2. I have translated the words *quod prodesset — what does good,* — by which I mean not what does good to others, but what does good to a man's self. And that this was Cicero's meaning appears from comparing this expression with the rest of the sentence.

[f] Ego adsentior Diogeni, qui bonum definierit, id, quod esset natura absolutum; id autem sequens, illud etiam quod prodesset (ὠφέλημα enim sic adpellemus) motum aut statum esse dixit e natura absoluta. Cic. de fin. l. 3. 10.

[g] Ἐπεὶ δὲ καθόλου τ' ἀγαθὸν ἅπαντες ἄνθρωποι χαρτὸν [illegible], εὐκταῖον, εὐτυχὲς, ἀξίαν ἔχον τὴν μεγίστην, αὐταρκες, ἀπροσδεὲς, ὅρα το [illegible] παρατιθεὶς ἀγαθὸν; ἆρά γε χαρτὸν ποιεῖ τὸ φρονίμως τὸν δακτύλον [illegible]; τί δ' εὐκταῖον ἐστι φρονίμη στρέβλωσις; [illegible] δὲ ὁ καλακρημνίζων ἑαυτὸν εὐλό[illegible], ἀξίαν.

" to be good, which gives joy *to the mind*, is de-
" sireable, produces happiness, is of all things
" most valuable, is self-sufficient, and perfect."
It is most likely that amongst *all mankind* he should include the Stoics in particular; because he is disputing against them and endeavouring to shew, not that they had a different notion of good from the rest of the world, but that those things and those circumstances of life, which in consequence of their opinion they must maintain to be good, were in fact not so. If he had been comparing their opinion with what other people thought; then indeed a definition of good, in which every body else but they were agreed, would have been most proper for his purpose: and he might have concluded, that their idea of good was wrong, because the common sense of mankind was against them. But this was not the case: he was not disputing about the definition; he was comparing their opinion with the common apprehensions of mankind about the reality of things, in order to prove that some circumstances of life, which had a mixture of what they said good consisted in, did not agree to the general definition of it. And unless he tried

ἀξίαν δὲ ἔχει τὴν μεγίστην ὃ πολλάκις αἱρεῖ λόγος ἀντὶ τοῦ μὴ ἀγαθοῦ προΐεσθαι; τέλειον δὲ καὶ αὐτάρκες ἐστιν, οὗ μὴ παρόντος, ἂν μὴ τυγχάνωσι τῶν ἀδιαφόρων, οὐχ᾽ ὑπομένουσι, οὐδὲ βούλονται ζῆν; Plutarch. adverf. Stoic. 1070. B. A learned young gentleman, who revised this sheet for me, conjectures that we should read *οὗ παρόντος* instead of *οὗ μὴ παρόντος*. The reader by attending to the sense of the whole passage will see the justness and necessity of this correction.

them

them by a standard, which they allowed of; all his reasonings must necessarily have been inconclusive: if the definition of good proposed by him had not been such an one as they admitted; it would have been an obvious reply for them to make; that the circumstances of life, which he produced, were not indeed good in his sense of the word, but still they might be good in their sense of it.

[a] The Peripatetics define *good* in the same manner that the Stoics do, — it is, according to them, *whatever is agreeable to nature.* And as they are well known to have maintained that health, strength, and beauty; riches, power, and reputation are good as well as virtue; though they give this infinitely the preference, yet it is plain that they make the good, which is in virtue, differ in degree only, not in sort, from that which is to be found in the advantages of body or of fortune. The Stoics allowed

[a] Hunc finem illi tenuerunt; quodque ego pluribus verbis, illi brevius, secundum naturam vivere. Cic. de fin. l. 4. 10. there seems to be little difference between this and *congruenter naturae convenienterque vivere*, which is the more usual expression for the Stoical ultimate end. De fin. l. 2. 7. The difference was so small that Seneca neglects it [Epist. 118.] and defines good to be, quod secundum naturam est, which are the very words that a Peripatetic or an Academic would make use of in defining it. Finis bonorum exsistit secundum naturam vivere. Cic. de fin. l. 5. 3, 9. Thus in Greek τὸ ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν and τὸ ζῆν κατὰ φύσιν are used promiscuously to express the Stoical ultimate end. Plut. advers. Stoic. 1060. E. Clem. Alexandrin. Strom. L. II. pag. 496. Diogen. Laërt. in Zenone. l. 7. seg. 87. 88. 89. And Critolaus the Peripatetic defined the ultimate end to be τελειότητα κατὰ φύσιν εὐροοῦντος βίου κ. τ. λ. Clem. Alexandrin. ut sup. p. 497. See. Cic. de fin. l. 5. 6. as quoted p. 169.

that

that theſe advantages are natural, and to diſpute whether they are good or not with the Peripatetics, who ſaid no more of them than this, was manifeſtly diſputing about words, and was ſo much the more extraordinary as both ſects gave the ſame definition of it. This ſeems to have been, what [i] Plutarch repreſents it, one of the many inſtances in which the Stoics run counter to common apprehenſion: for whilſt they make an agreement with nature the laſt end of action, they maintain notwithſtanding that ſome things, which are agreeable to nature, are quite indifferent. Seneca was aware of this and has taken ſome pains to account for it in the following manner.—— [k] "Good "is what is agreeable to nature: obſerve what I ſay, "—what is good is alſo agreeable to nature, but "it is not therefore immediately true, that what "is agreeable to nature is good: there are many "things, which ſuit with our nature; but ſome of "them are ſo inſignificant, that the name of *good* "cannot with any propriety be given to them:

[i] Καίτοι τί μᾶλλον ἢ κατὰ τὴν κοινὴν ἔννοιαν, εἰ καθάπερ τὰ αἱρετὰ πρὸς τὸ ὠφελίμως, οὕτω τὰ κατὰ φύσιν πρὸς τὸ ζῆν κατὰ φύσιν; οἱ δὲ οὐχ οὕτω λέγουσιν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ζῆν κατὰ φύσιν τέλος εἶναι τιθέμενοι τὰ κατὰ φύσιν ἀδιάφορα εἶναι νομίζουσιν. Plutarch. adverſ. Stoic. 1060. E.

[k] Bonum eſt, quod ſecundum naturam eſt: attende quid dicam, quod bonum eſt, et ſecundum naturam eſt: non protinus quod ſecundum naturam eſt et bonum eſt. Multa quidem naturae conſentiunt; ſed tam puſilla ſunt, ut non conveniat illis boni nomen, levia enim ſunt et contemnenda; nullum nec minimum contemnendum bonum. Nam quamdiu exiguum eſt, bonum non eſt, cum bonum eſſe coepit, non exiguum eſt. Unde aliquid cognoſcitur bonum?

fit

“ they are trifling and contemptible; and no-
“ thing that is good can be so: as long as it con-
“ tinues small it is not good, and when it becomes
“ good it is small no longer. What therefore is
“ the true mark, that any thing is good? — *its*
“ *being* perfectly *agreeable to nature* — for both
“ that, which is good, and that, which is not so,
“ are agreeable to nature; but then the magni-
“ tude or degree makes a difference between
“ them. For some things by changing their degree,
“ change their properties too; thus he, who, whilst
“ he was an infant, had no reason, grown up to
“ manhood has the full use of it: and in the same
“ manner what is agreeable to nature by improv-
“ ing in degree and growing more perfectly agree-
“ able to it passes into another character, which it
“ had not before, and becomes good.” Whether Seneca has cleared up the inconsistency, which his party is charged with, is not material: it is sufficient to the present purpose, that, whatever change of quality might in his opinion be introduced into

si perfecte secundum naturam est: fateris, inquis, quod bonum est, secundum naturam esse; haec ejus proprietas est: fateris et alia secundum naturam quidem esse, sed non bona esse: quomodo ergo illud bonum est, cum haec non sint? quomodo ad aliam proprietatem pervenit, cum utrique praecipuum illud commune sit, — secundum naturam esse? — ipsa scilicet magnitudine. Nec hoc novum est, quaedam crescendo mutari: infans fuit, factus est pubes; alia ejus proprietas fit: ille irrationalis, est hic rationalis. Quaedam incremento non tantum in majus exeunt, sed in aliud. * * * * * * eadem ratione aliquid secundum naturam fuit: hoc in aliam proprietatem magnitudo sua transtulit, et bonum fecit. Senec. epist. 118.

what is agreeable to nature as it improves in degree: he does not think it a change, that makes it less agreeable to nature, but one, that makes it more so: and as *the being agreeable to nature* is essential to his notion of good, he could not possibly mean any other than self-good or happiness. If he had meant any other, and had at the same time spoken the sentiments of the whole sect; the dispute between them and the Peripatetics would have been at an end: not because this account of good could determine which side was in the right; but because it would shew that they said nothing contrary to one another. For as the good, which is to be met with in the advantages of body and the gifts of fortune, can be nothing but a self-good, or nothing but the happiness which they afford; therefore the good, that is in virtue, must in the mouth of a Peripatetic, mean a self-good too; because in the opinion of his sect one of these differs from the other not in sort but only in degree. When therefore he maintains, that some things are good besides virtue, his meaning is that self-good or happiness is to be found somewhere else: and when the Stoic affirms that virtue is the only good, unless he had meant that it is the only self-good or only happiness, one would not have said any thing contrary to the other, and no dispute could have subsisted between them upon this point. The school of Polemo might have taught, that self-good is to be found in health, strength and beauty;

beauty; in riches, power and honour as well as in virtue, without making the least opposition to the school of Zeno, if this sect by teaching, that virtue is the only good, had meant, that something, which is not a self-good is to be found no where but in virtue. The Peripatetics indeed do frequently tell the Stoics, that the dispute between them was only about words: but then their reason for thinking so was not because they had different notions of good, when one sect maintained, that nothing but virtue is good, and the other that the advantages of body and of fortune are good as well as virtue; but because they had both the same notion of good, and yet, whilst Zeno allowed as much weight or influence to these advantages as Polemo did, he was not willing to call them by the same name.[t]

But if the Stoics by *good* meant *self-good*, then by the point, which they so much laboured to establish, that *virtue is the only good*, they must

[t] Omnium autem eorum commodorum, quibus non illi plus tribuunt, qui illa bona esse dicunt, quam Zeno, qui negat, longe praestantissimum &c. Cic. de fin. l. 4. 21.

Ad summam, ea quae Zeno aestimanda et sumenda et apta naturae esse dixit, eadem illi bona adpellant. ibid.—Si de re disceptari oporteret; nulla mihi tecum, Cato, potest esse dissensio: nihil est enim, de quo aliter tu sentias, atque ego, modo commutatis verbis ipsas res conferamus. De fin. l. 4. 22.

Ego, quam ille praeponendam et magis eligendam, beatiorem hanc adpello: nec ullo minimo momento plus ei vitae tribuo, quam Stoici. Quid interest, nisi quod ego res notas notis verbis adpello, illi nomina nova quaerunt, quibus eadem dicant. De fin. l. 5. 29.

mean that it is *the only happiness*, or that *virtue and happiness are the same thing*. And this we find they do maintain and very explicitly too. [m] "Who "is there, says Cicero in the person of a Stoic, that "could be elate upon his life being miserable, or "that could be otherwise upon its being happy? "The answer to this question shews us that no "one has any reason to glory but in a happy life: "and the consequence is, that a happy life must "deserve our good opinion: but since only a vir-"tuous life can deserve it, that, which is virtuous, "must be happy." Plutarch seems to have been fully satisfied, that this was the favourite and distinguishing principle of the Stoical sect: for he makes use of it in disputing against their doctrines to shew, that Chrysippus is guilty of contradicting himself. [n] "If, says this writer, he had thought

[m] Quis aut de misera vita possit gloriari aut non de beata? de sola igitur beata: ex quo efficitur, gloriatione, ut ita dicam, dignam esse beatam vitam; quod non possit quidem nisi honestae vitae jure contingere: ita fit, ut honesta vita, beata vita sit. Cic. de fin. l. 3. 8. That *beata vita* is rightly translated, *a happy life* in this place, may be proved from what is opposed to it, *vita misera.*

[n] *Εἰ μὲν οὖν τὴν φρόνησιν ἡγεῖτο ποιητικὸν εἶναι τῆς εὐδαιμονίας ἀγαθὸν ὥσπερ ὁ Ἐπίκουρος, αὐτῆς ἔδει μόνον τῆς ἀτοπίας καὶ παραδοξολογίας ἐπιλαμβάνεσθαι τοῦ δόγματος. ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ φρόνησις οὐχ ἕτερόν ἐστι τῆς εὐδαιμονίας καθ' αὐτὸ, ἀλλ' εὐδαιμονία, πῶς οὐ μάχεται τὸ λέγειν, ἐπίσης μὲν αἱρετὴν εἶναι τὴν ἀμεριαίαν εὐδαιμονίαν καὶ τὴν ἀΐδιον, μηδενὸς δὲ ἀξίαν τὴν ἀμεριαίαν.* Plutarch. de repugnant. Stoic. 1046. D. The word which I have translated eligible, is *ἀρετὴν* in all the editions that I have met with. I have ventured in the quotation to read it *αἱρετὴν*, because both the sense of the passage, and the words of Chrysippus, as they are quoted just before by Plutarch [*ἤδη τῆς ἀϊδίου εὐδαιμονίας αἱρετωτέρας γενομένης παρὰ τὴν ἀμεριαίαν.*] require that we should read it so.—Though Plutarch has

" with Epicurus, that wisdom [*or virtue*] is a good, " which *produces* happiness, he would be charge- " able with talking against common sense only " and the general opinion of mankind. But, as " he makes wisdom the same thing with happi- " ness, does not he contradict himself, when he " says, that a momentary happiness is as eligible " as an eternal one, and yet contends at the " same time, that a momentary happiness is not " worth regarding?" But where was the absurdity of this, if Chrysippus had proposed virtue as an ultimate end or final good distinct from happiness? for then the shortest happiness, though not worth regarding, would be as eligible as the longest: because neither of them would upon this supposition contribute at all to our final good; and nothing but what does contribute to this will by a wise man be thought of importance enough to deserve

has distinguished between φρόνησις and σοφία, [De virt. moral. 443.F.] yet I have translated φρόνησις in this place *wisdom*: because it certainly means the Stoical ultimate end, and he, who has obtained this, in Latin is called *sapiens*. But whatever word we translate it by, its being the Stoical ultimate end will prove that it signifies the same as virtue: and this is sufficient for our present purpose. Cicero seems in one place to have translated it by *ingenii praestantia*. In prima igitur constitutione Zeno tuus a natura recessit: cumque summum bonum posuisset in ingenii praestantia, quam virtutem vocamus &c. De fin. l. 4. 19. And in another place he has paraphrased it by intelligentiam earum rerum, quae natura evenirent, eligentem ea, quae essent secundum naturam, rejicientemque contraria: which he makes the same as e virtute, id est, honestate vivere. De fin. l. 2. 11. This shews us how we are to understand what he says. de offic. l. 1. 43. φρόνησις [prudentia] est rerum expetendarum fugiendarumque scientia.

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his notice. The contradiction consists in representing that to be contemptible, which is in his opinion the very same with what he would have us pursue as our ultimate end; and in teaching his followers to despise a happpiness of short continuance, though he affirms it to be equal in value to such as will last for ever, and yet maintaining that virtue is happiness, or that there is no difference between them: for this was the same as telling them that virtue is not to be desired and yet that it is the only thing, which is desireable. I would have the reader take particular notice before we leave this passage in Plutarch, that the opinion of the Stoical school, as far as he understood it, was, *not that virtue leads to happiness or naturally produces it, but that there is no difference between them, that virtue is the same thing as happiness:* upon this as an allowed principle he disputes against Chrysippus; and this is what I have been endeavouring to prove they meant by their well known principle——*that virtue is the only good.*

Many other authorities may be produced to the same purpose. Cicero expressly says, that "[o] Zeno placed a happy life in virtue alone." And when he had undertaken to support one of the Stoical paradoxes, and therefore ought to speak

[o] Zeno in una virtute positam beatam vitam putat. Cic. quaest. Academ. l. 2. 43.

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the sentiments of that whole school, he concludes, that "[p] to live happily is nothing else but to live "virtuously." "[q] Why should not you think, Lucilius, says Seneca, that the surest way to make "life happy is to be persuaded that virtue is the "only good? He, that includes every thing, which "is good, in virtue, is happy in himself." [r] "What "is good, as Chrysippus reasons, is eligible; and "what is eligible is pleasing; and what is pleasing is praise-worthy; and what is praise-worthy is virtuous: and again, what is good, gives us "joy, and what does this, challenges respect from "us; and what we owe respect to is virtue." Cato's reasoning in Cicero is just of the same sort: —[s] "It "is very absurd to think any thing good, which is "not desireable, or any thing desireable, which is "not pleasing; or if any thing is pleasing, then it is

[p] Profecto nihil est aliud bene et beate vivere, nisi honeste et recte vivere. Paradox. 1. 4.

[q] Quidni tu, mi Lucili, maximum putes instrumentum beatae vitae hanc persuasionem, unum bonum esse, quod honestum est? qui omne bonum honesto circumscripsit intra se felix est. Senec. epist. 74.

[r] Καὶ μὴν ἐν τῷ περὶ καλῦ, πρὸς ἀπόδειξιν τῦ μόνον τὸ καλὸν ἀγαθὸν εἶναι, τοιέτοις λόγοις κέχρηται· τὸ ἀγαθὸν αἱρετόν· τὸ δ᾽ αἱρετὸν ἀρεστόν· τὸ δ᾽ ἀρεστὸν ἐπαινετόν· τὸ δ᾽ ἐπαινετὸν καλόν· καὶ πάλιν τὸ ἀγαθὸν χαρτόν· τὸ δὲ χαρτὸν σεμνόν· τὸ δὲ σεμνὸν καλόν. Plutarch. de repugnant. Stoic. 1039. C.

[s] Illud autem perabsurdum, bonum esse aliquid, quod non expetendum sit; aut expetendum, quod non placens; aut si id, non etiam diligendum: ergo et approbandum: ita etiam laudabile: id autem honestum: ita fit, ut, quod bonum sit, id etiam honestum sit. Cic. de fin. l. 3. 8.

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"absurd to think, that it does not deserve our "love, and if it deserves our love, then our appro- "bation too: therefore it must be praise-worthy: "and what is praise-worthy is virtuous." I am not concerned to shew, that these arguments are sufficient to prove virtue and happiness to be the same thing. But from the whole turn of them it appears, that this was what the Stoics designed to prove, when they were endeavouring to establish the leading principle of their sect—*that virtue is the only good.*—For since the good, which they would demonstrate to be contained in the very notion of virtue, is a good, which pleases and gives joy to us; it may as well be called happiness: and to say that virtue is the only good in this sense, is the same as to say that it is the only happiness. Cicero must understand them in this sense: for when he had proved in the Stoical manner, [t] *that virtue is the only good; he infers, that the happiness of life consists in virtue.* And when he allows it to be easy for the Stoics to conclude that a virtuous man's life must be happy; he gives such a reason for allowing it as plainly shews what he took to be the meaning of their favourite maxim:—[u] *because such a man has the sovereign good in his power, and therefore*

[t] Solum igitur bonum quod honestum: ex quo efficitur, honestate una vitam contineri beatam. Tusc. disput. 5.15.

[u] Sequatur necesse est, ut cujus in potestate summum bonum, in ejusdem vita beata sit: ita fit semper vita beata sapientis. Tusc. disput. 5.28.

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must have happiness in his power too. "[x] If, says "he, when philosophers have any point to defend, "it was customary to make use of what has been "proved or granted upon another occasion with-"out disputing it over again, a Stoic need say but "little in answer to the enquiry—whether virtue "is sufficient to make life happy: it would be "enough for him to reply, that he had already "shewn virtue to be the only good, and the con-"sequence of this is, that a happy life consists in "being virtuous: and just in the same manner, if "he had proved that a happy life consists in "virtue, he might have inferred that virtue is the "only good."

That this was generally thought to be the meaning of the Stoical principle will be put farther beyond doubt from considering the inconsistencies, which the [y] Peripatetics are charged

[x] Philosophi, quamcunque rem habent in manibus, in eam quae conveniunt, congerunt omnia, etsi alio loco disputata sunt. Quod ni ita esset; cur Stoicus, si esset quaesitum, satisne ad beate vivendum virtus posset, multa diceret? cui satis esset respondere, se ante docuisse nihil bonum esse, nisi quod honestum esset: hoc probato, consequens esse, beatam vitam virtute esse contentam: et quomodo hoc sit consequens illi, sic illud huic; ut, si beata vita virtute contenta sit, nisi honestum quod sit, nihil aliud sit bonum. Tusc. disput. l. 5. 7.

[y] Zeno in una virtute positam beatam vitam putat. Quid Antiochus? etiam, inquit, beatam, sed non beatissimam. Deus ille, qui nihil censuit deesse virtuti; homuncio hic, qui multa putat praeter virtutem homini partim cara esse, partim etiam necessaria. Sed ille vereor ne virtute plus tribuat quam natura patiatur, praesertim Theophrasto multa diserte copioseque dicente. Et hic metuo, ne vix sibi constet; qui cum dicat esse quaedam et corporis et fortu-

with and the Stoics are allowed to have avoided. The Peripatetics contended, that the misfortunes of life, the pain and torture of the body are evils; and the Academic very reasonably asks them,

nae mala, tamen eum, qui in his omnibus sit, beatum fore censet, si sapiens sit. Cic. quaest. Acad. l. 2. 43.—Illud mihi a te nimium festinanter dictum videtur, sapientes omnes esse semper beatos: nescio quomodo praetervolaverit oratio. Quod nisi ita efficitur, quae Theophrastus de fortuna, de dolore, de cruciatu corporis dixit, cum quibus conjungi beatam vitam nullo modo putavit, vereor ne vera sint. Nam illud vehementer repugnat eundem beatum esse et multis malis oppressum. Haec quomodo conveniant non sane intelligo. Utrum igitur tibi non placet, inquit, virtutis tantam vim esse, ut ad beate vivendum se ipsa contenta sit? an, si id probas, ita fieri posse negas, ut ii, qui virtutis compotes sint, etiam malis quibusdam adfecti, beati sint? ego vero volo in virtute vim esse quam maximam: sed quanta sit, alias: nunc tantum, possitne esse tanta, si quicquam extra virtutem habeatur in bonis. Atqui, inquit, si Stoicis concedis ut virtus sola, si adsit, vitam efficiat beatam concedis et Peripateticis. Quae enim mala illi non audent adpellare, aspera autem et incommoda et rejicienda et aliena naturae esse concedunt, et nos mala esse dicimus. sed exigua et porro minima. Quare si potest esse beatus is, qui est in asperis rejiciendisque rebus, potest is quoque esse, qui in parvis malis.—— respondebo me non quaerere, inquam, hoc tempore quid virtus possit efficere, sed quid constanter dicatur, quid ipsum a se dissentiat. Quo igitur, inquit, modo? Quia cum a Zenone, inquam, hoc magnifice, tanquam ex oraculo, editur, virtus ad beate vivendum se ipsa contenta est; quare inquit? respondet, quia nisi quod honestum est, nullum est aliud bonum. Non quaero jam, verumne sit illud: dico ea, quae dicat, praeclare inter se cohaerere. ——Dicis eadem omnia et bona et mala, quae quidem dicunt, qui nunquam philosophum pictum, ut dicitur, viderunt; valetudinem, vires, staturam, formam, integritatem unguiculorum omnium: deformitatem, morbum, debilitatem, mala. Jam illa externa, parce tu quidem: sed haec cum corporis bona sint, eorum conficientia certe in bonis numerabis, amicos, liberos, propinquos, divitias, honores, opes. Contra haec attende me nihil dicere: si ista mala sunt, in quae potest incidere sapiens; sapientem esse non est ad beate vivendum satis. Cic. de fin. l. 5. 26.

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how it is possible upon these principles to shew that virtue is sufficient to make life happy? since the virtuous man is not exempted from these evils: and no one can be happy, whilst he has evils to struggle with. In the mean time the objector grants, that, if the Stoics set out upon a true principle; if nothing is good but virtue and these external calamities are not evils, then their consequence will have no inconsistency in it: let the virtuous man's circumstances be what you will, he must be happy. This principle of theirs might indeed be disputed; but it does not concern me whether it be true or false: for if the consequence of virtue's being the only good is that the virtuous man even whilst under the pressure of external calamities, must be happy, then this sect by maintaining it to be the only good must mean that it is the only happiness. For if there was in their opinion any other happiness besides virtue, something would be wanting to make his life completely happy, who is possessed of virtue: and thus the consequence—*that a virtuous life amidst all the diseases of the body and all the hardships of fortune must be a happy one* — would be as inconsistent, when a Stoic infers it from having first proved virtue to be the only good and the want of it to be the only evil, as when a Peripatetic espouses it, who affirms, that many things are good besides, and that the want of every thing, which is

good, must be called an evil, as well as the want of virtue.

It must be owned that many of the ancient philosophers do sometimes represent virtue in such a manner, as seems not to agree very well with this account of the Stoical opinion about it. [z] They describe it as being what we cannot but esteem, though it should not be productive of our interest: they tell us, that it is to be approved for its own sake, and that it is to be chosen because it is fit and right: which appear at first sight to be very different reasons for being virtuous from what Cato must have in his mind, if Cicero has made him speak his real sentiments, when he represents virtue as not worth our notice, if it could be miserable.

I am inclined to believe, that this was more frequently the language of the old Academy and of the Peripatetic school than of the Stoic. And it may be difficult to understand what a Stoic could mean by setting up virtue as the object of our choice though unrecommended by utility or

[z] Virtus est adfectio animi constans conveniensque; laudabiles efficiens eos, in quibus est, et ipsa per se, sua sponte, separata etiam utilitate laudabilis. Cic. Tusc. disp. 4. 15. Honestum igitur id intelligimus, quod tale est, ut detracta omni utilitate, sine ullis praemiis, fructibusque, per se ipsum possit jure laudari: quod quale sit, non tam definitione, qua sum usus, intelligi potest [quanquam aliquantulum potest] quam communi omnium judicio et optumi cujusque studiis atque factis: qui permulta ob eam unam causam faciunt, quia decet, quia rectum, quia honestum est, etsi nullum consecuturum emolumentum vident. De fin. l. 2. 14.

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intereſt; ſince his ſect maintained that virtue and utility are the ſame thing, and ſo carried this matter farther than Socrates did, who ſpeaks however ſomething like the ſentiments which were afterwards taken up by Zeno, [a] when he ſays that virtue and utility are naturally connected, and reproaches thoſe, who firſt thought of ſeparating them. And yet, as if it was of more importance to talk in high terms about virtue than to be intelligible, the Stoic ſometimes makes uſe of the ſame expreſſions: and [b] Cicero ſpeaks for Chryſippus, when he affirms that it is impoſſible there ſhould be any virtue, unleſs it is diſintereſted. But how is this conſiſtent with ſaying, that *virtue is not worth our notice if it can be miſerable?* or how ſhall we make his opinions intelligible, who at one time maintains, that virtue and intereſt are the very ſame thing, and at another repreſents them as quite different, by deſcribing the nature of virtue to be ſuch as will neceſſarily approve itſelf to us, even though it ſhould fail of producing our intereſt?

[a] Itaque accepimus Socratem execrari ſolitum eos, qui primum haec natura cohaerentia opinione diſtraxiſſent. Cui quidem ita ſunt Stoici aſſenſi, ut quidquid honeſtum eſſet, id utile eſſe cenſerent; nec utile quidquam, quod non honeſtum. Cic. de offic. l. 3. 3.

[b] Unum igitur par, quod depugnet, reliquum eſt, voluptas cum honeſtate, de quo Chryſippo fuit, quantum ego ſentio, non magna contentio: alterum ſi ſequare multa ruunt et maxime communitas cum hominum genere, caritas, amicitia, juſtitia, reliquae virtutes, quarum eſſe nulla poteſt, niſi erit gratuita. Cic. quaeſt. Acad. l. 2. 46.

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To clear up this difficulty, it muſt be obſerved, that the word *utility* has two different ſenſes given it by the antients. Sometimes it means *happineſs in general:* and in this ſenſe we find it uſed by Cicero, where he ſays, " [c] that if nothing is ſo " contrary to nature as viciouſneſs, and nothing " ſo agreeable to it as utility, then it is impoſſi- " ble for viciouſneſs and utility to meet in the " ſame ſubject. And farther; if nature originally " deſigned us for virtue, and this alone, as Zeno " thought, be deſireable, or at leaſt be of infinite- " ly more weight than all things beſides, which " was Ariſtotle's opinion; it neceſſarily follows " that virtue is either the only or the greateſt " good; but utility is connected with the notion " of good, and therefore with the notion of vir- " tue too." This is the ſenſe in which the words intereſt or utility are uſed, when the Stoics affirm, " [d] that virtue is our only intereſt and that virtue " and utility are different expreſſions indeed but

[c] Quod ſi nihil eſt tam contra naturam, quam turpitudo —— nihilque tam ſecundum naturam, quam utilitas: certe in eadem re utilitas et turpitudo eſſe non poteſt. Itemque ſi ad honeſtatem nati ſumus, eaque aut ſola expetenda eſt [ut Zenoni viſum est;] aut certe omni pondere gravior habenda, quam reliqua omnia, quod Ariſtoteli placet; neceſſe eſt, quod honeſtum ſit, id eſſe aut ſolum, aut ſummum bonum; quod autem bonum, id certe utile; ita quidquid honeſtum, id certe utile. Cic. de offic. l. 3. 8.

[d] Honeſtate igitur dirigenda utilitas eſt, et quidem ſic, ut haec duo, verbo inter ſe diſcrepare, re tamen unum ſonare videantur. Cic. de offic. l. 3. 21.

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"both mean the ſame thing:" which is no more than affirming virtue to be the only good, that is, (if we mean ſelf-good) the only happineſs.

But the word [e] *utility* was uſed *in a more reſtrained ſenſe* for *the advantages of body and of fortune in particular*. And though a Stoic in the former ſenſe of the word conſiders utility as the ſame thing with virtue, he may in this latter ſenſe [f] conſiſtently enough diſtinguiſh one from the other: and thus either he or the Peripatetic might repreſent virtue as recommending itſelf to our choice though ſtripped of all utility and not productive of our intereſt;

[e] Tum autem anquirunt, aut conſultant ad vitae commoditatem jucunditatemque, ad facultates rerum atque copias, ad opes, ad potentiam, quibus et ſe poſſint juvare et ſuos, conducat id nec ne, de quo deliberatur. Quae deliberatio omnis in rationem utilitatis cadit. Cic. de offic. l. 1. 3. Sed utilitatum comparatio ſaepe eſt neceſſaria.—Nam et corporis commoda cum externis, et externa cum corporis, et ipſa inter ſe corporis, et externa cum externis comparari ſolent: cum externis, corporis hoc modo comparantur; valere ut malis, quam dives eſſe. cum corporis externa hoc modo, dives eſſe potius, quam maxumis corporis viribus: ipſa inter ſe corporis ſic; ut bona valetudo voluptati anteponatur, vires celeritati: externorum autem, ut gloria divitiis, vectigalia urbana ruſticis. l. 2. 25.

[f] Panaetius with this allowance of uſing the word *intereſt* in different ſenſes upon different occaſions was leſs blameable than Cicero ſeems to think him. Quod ſi is eſſet Panaetius, qui virtutem propterea colendam diceret, quod ea efficiens utilitatis eſſet; ut ii, qui res expetendas vel voluptate vel indolentia metiuntur: liceret ei dicere utilitatem aliquando cum honeſtate pugnare. Sed cum ſit is, qui id ſolum bonum judicet, quod honeſtum ſit: quae autem huic repugnent ſpecie quadam utilitatis, eorum neque acceſſione meliorem vitam fieri, nec deceſſione pejorem: non videtur ejuſmodi debuiſſe deliberationem introducere, in qua, quod utile videretur, cum eo, quod honeſtum eſt, compararetur. Cic. de offic. l. 3. 3.

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and yet might affirm without contradicting themselves, that virtue would not be worth our notice, if it could be miserable. For as [g] one of them is of opinion, that the advantages of body make no part of happiness, and the [h] other, that they make a most inconsiderable and most contemptible part of it; by being stripped of utility or interest in this sense, neither of them mean being stripped of happiness.

If they, who have no taste for the pleasures, that virtue affords, and who do not perceive it to be the most exquisite enjoyment, that human nature is capable of, but think virtue one thing and happiness another, if these should maintain, that virtue is valued and loved for its own sake or because

[g] Ne illud quidem est consentaneum, ut, si cum tria genera bonorum sint, quae sententia est Peripateticorum, eo beatior quisque sit, quo sit corporis aut externis bonis plenior, [ut hoc idem approbandum sit nobis (*Stoicis*) ut qui plura habeat, quae in corpore magni aestimantur, sit beatior] illi enim corporis commodis compleri vitam beatam putant, nostri nihil minus. Cic. de fin. l. 3. 13.

[h] At enim qua in vita est aliquid mali, ea esse beata non potest. Ne seges quidem igitur spicis uberibus et crebris, si avenam uspiam videris, nec mercatura quaestuosa, si in maxumis lucris aliquid damni contraxerit. An hoc usquequaque aliter in vita? et non ex maxuma parte de tota judicabis? an dubium est, quin virtus ita maxumam partem obtineat in rebus humanis, ut reliquas obruat? Audebo igitur quae secundum naturam sint bona adpellare, nec fraudare suo veteri nomine, potius quam aliquid novum exquirere; virtutis autem amplitudinem quasi in altera librae lance ponere: terram, mihi crede, ea lanx et maria deprimet. Semper enim ex eo, quod maxumas partes continet, latissimeque funditur, tota res adpellatur. Cic. de fin. l. 5. 30.

it is virtue; it would be inconsistent in them to affirm afterwards, that virtue is not worth our notice if it could possibly be miserable: this would be no better than maintaining that virtue is desireable upon its own account, and yet that there can be no reason for desiring it unless it has something else to recommend it. But when they said this, who included happiness in the notion of virtue; when either the Peripatetics said it, who esteemed virtue incomparably the greatest good, or the Stoics, who contended that it is the only good, there is no great difficulty in clearing up their meaning. For pursuing virtue is to them pursuing happiness; and esteeming virtue for its own sake, or because it is virtue, is but endeavouring to obtain the greatest or the only good, because it is the greatest or the only good: and if the nature of virtue could possibly be changed, and cease to be, what in their opinion it now is, the only true enjoyment of man, it must then upon their principles be no longer desireable; for they reckon that it is made desireable only by being the sovereign good or chief happiness: and therefore it is very consistent in them to say, that if it could lose this quality and possibly be miserable, it would be no longer worth our notice.

[g] If by fitness or rectitude, which these philosophers sometimes talk of, they mean something,

[g] Decori vis ea est, ut ab honesto non queat separari. Nam et quod decet, honestum est; et quod honestum est, decet: qualis autem dif-

 ferentia

which is different from virtue; then to follow virtue because it is fit and right would be to make fitness or rectitude and not virtue the ultimate end. But this is not agreeable to the principles either of the Peripatetics or of the Stoics: and indeed by their own account of the matter, *fit or right* are made to differ so little from virtue, that we may venture to say they were only different names for the same thing. If this be the case, then by esteeming virtue because it is fit and right they meant no more than esteeming it for its own sake; which is only seeming to give a reason, where no reason ought to have been asked. For to ask a Stoic in particular why he approves virtue, is but asking him why he pursues his ultimate end; and such a question as this deserves no answer. Or if a Stoic should chance to be good natured enough to think of giving an answer, it could only be one of this very uninstructing sort; because it is his ultimate end, because it is right or because it is virtue.

When I say that a Stoic ought not to be asked a reason why he approves virtue, it is not because I think his opinion so true that it cannot be disputed; but because, if he has established his first principle —— *that virtue is the only good or the*

ferentia sit honesti et decori, facilius intelligi, quam explanari potest, Cic. de offic. l. 1. 27. I have here and every where else supposed the word *honestum* in Latin to mean the same as *virtue* or *virtuous* in English; for Cicero says, Honestum aut ipsa virtus est, aut res gesta virtute. De fin. l. 5. 23.

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ultimate end, — to ask him afterwards why he approves it, is impertinent and can be of no use in shewing that his opinion is false: to do this we should desire him to make out his first principle that virtue is the only good: for if this is either granted or can be once clearly proved, whatever he says afterwards of virtue will be indisputably true.

Having thus shewn particularly that the Stoics, when they call virtue the only good, mean that it is the only self-good; and having had frequent occasion, whilst I was enquiring after their opinion, to take notice that the Peripatetics mean the same, when they call it the greatest good; I may be allowed without examining the opinions of the other sects to conclude, that all the antients, when they agree so unanimously that the sovereign good of man is his proper pursuit, understood by it that his own happiness is his ultimate end.

The later philosophers too have all agreed in this point; though some of them appear at first sight to have been of a contrary opinion. The Noble patron of disinterested benevolence, who starts at every mention of rewards, as if he thought our virtue would be in danger by them, and almost cautions us against being Christians for fear of betraying it, will scarce be imagined to propose no other end of action but our own happiness, and to make a regard to ourselves the principal point in view, even when we admire the beauties of virtue

and pay obedience to it's dictates. But let us first hear what he says and then judge of his opinion. "Other "authors there have been of a yet inferior kind: "a sort of distributers and petty retailers of this "wit, who have run changes and divisions without end upon this article of self-love. You have "the very same thought spun out a hundred ways, "and drawn into motto's and devises, to set forth "this riddle, that act as disinterestedly or generously as you please, self is still at the bottom, "and nothing else. Now if these gentlemen, who "delight so much in the play of words, but are "cautious how they grapple closely with definitions, would tell us only what self-interest was, "and determine happiness and good, there would "be an end of this enigmatical wit. For in this we "should all agree, that happiness was to be pursued and in fact was always sought after: but "whether found in following nature, and giving "way to common affection; or in suppressing it "and turning every passion towards private advantage, a narrow self-end, or the preservation "of mere life, this would be the matter in debate "between us, the question would not be who "loved himself, or who not; but who loved and "served himself the rightest and after the truest "manner." "It must needs, says he in another "place, be a hard case with us, after having passed "so learned a childhood and been instructed in

Shaftesbury's charact. V. I. pag. 120.

V. I. p. 307.

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" our own and other higher natures, essences, in-
" corporeal substances, personalitys and the like;
" to condescend at riper years to ruminate and
" con over this lesson a second time. 'Tis hard,
" after having by so many pertinent interrogatorys
" and decisive sentences declared who and what
" we are, to come leisurely, in another view, to
" enquire concerning our *real self* and end, the
" judgment we are to make of interest and the
" opinion we should have of advantage or good,
" which is what must necessarily determine us in
" our conduct, and prove the leading principle
" of our lives." These two passages are direct proofs of the point in hand: for our author here expresly grants that happiness, advantage, self-interest or self-good are in fact sought after and cannot but be pursued by all.

Though perhaps they, who have heard him talk of virtue and the love of it, will scarce be persuaded that these were his real sentiments. Could he think that virtue has not charms enough of it's own to recommend it though unattended with any hopes of advantage, who conceives that any expectation of reward is always dangerous to true worth and frequently destructive of it, because in his opinion it reduces virtue to a mere bargain of interest? Is selfishness at the bottom when we comply, as he says we ought, with the affections of a public sort; when we are carried out of

V. II. p. 69. 58.

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ourselves and appear disregardful of our own conveniency and safety? — And yet if he had thought otherwise; if he had been of opinion, that the affections, which he talks of, towards the interests of mankind were to be complyed with and indulged, whatever became of those other affections towards self-good; he need not have given himself the trouble in making out the obligation of
V. II. p. 175. virtue to establish this conclusion — that "Virtue, "which of all excellencys and beautys is the chief "and most amiable; that, which is the prop and "ornament of human affairs; which upholds "communitys, maintains union, friendship and "correspondence amongst men; that, by which "countrys as well as private familys flourish, "and are happy; and for want of which, every "thing comely, conspicuous, great and worthy "must perish, and go to ruin; that single quality "thus beneficial to all society, and to mankind in "general, is found equally a happiness and good "to each creature in particular, and is that, by "which alone man can be happy and without "which he must be miserable."

For let it be presumed with ever so much ap-
V. II. p. 78. 79. &c. pearance of reason that the pursuing a common interest or public good through the affections of one kind must be a hindrance to the attainment of private good through the affections of another; yet he could not have supposed this to weaken the

the obligations of virtue and to make it less our duty to comply with it; unless our duty did in his opinion so much depend upon our interest, that we are not obliged to any thing only as far as it is productive of private good to ourselves.

But it was not inconsistent in this Noble author to be so bitter against every thing, which looks like selfishness in the practice of virtue, and yet not only to grant that interest, advantage or good is what necessarily determines our conduct, but even to trace out the obligation of virtue from this single principle — that moral rectitude is the advantage, and vice the injury and disadvantage of every creature. —— For to understand what he means we must attend to his distinction between a true and a false self. "If there be found, says V. II. p. 23. "he, in any creature a more than ordinary self-"concernment, or regard to private good, which "is inconsistent with the interest of the species "or public, this must in every respect be esteem-"ed an ill and vitious affection: and this is what "we commonly call selfishness, and disapprove "so much in whatever creature we happen to "discover it." But to consider ourselves as parts of a species or kind, to sympathize with this species, V. II. p. 16. 17. and give way to those common affections, which [in]cite us to it, this he looked upon to be following [n]ature, to be cultivating our real self, or pursuing V. II. p. 99. 358. [ou]r true interest. For the having these generous af-fections V. I. p. 121. 120.

fections strong and powerful towards the good of the public, is according to him the same as having the chief means and power of self-enjoyment. So that the true state of the question was, not whether we should endeavour to be happy, but how we should endeavour it with the most success: not whether we should follow our own interest, but where our true interest may be found: not whether every man should take care of himself, but whether he can possibly do this, when he considers that *self* as detached from the rest of the species, and as having advantages and enjoyments unconnected with the good of the public. Our true interest is placed by him in giving way to and cultivating the public affections, which unite us to mankind; and upon these natural advantages he undertakes to establish the obligations of virtue. What he dislikes in annexing positive rewards and foreign advantages to the practice of it is that they are not very likely to improve our love of it: because such happiness as is quite different from what the native beauty of virtue affords, might, he fears, make us regard this beauty the less; or might by degrees take off our affections from it and give them such a wrong turn, that, unless we were very much upon our guard, we should grow indifferent to virtue itself, and be fond only of the rewards which attend it. He grants that to desire a happiness besides what virtue

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feel in the practice of virtue, and to purſue an intereſt beſides what neceſſarily flows from doing good, may be harmleſs in itſelf, and, if managed with caution, may be of uſe in ſupporting virtue. All that he ſeems to be apprehenſive of is that without great care ſuch conſequences might follow from theſe purſuits as would make them fatal in the end to that very virtue, which they were intended to ſupport: they might teach us to think our intereſts detached from the reſt of the world, and might introduce the only ſort of ſelfiſhneſs that he condemns, an affection, which has a wrong ſelf for its object, and which leads us to ſeek for happineſs in turning every paſſion to ſome private advantage that is wholly unconnected with the intereſts of our ſpecies.

Though he never paints virtue as offering *with her right hand length of days, and with her left hand riches and honour* leaſt our affections ſhould be engaged by the rewards propoſed, to the prejudice of her who makes the offer; leaſt we ſhould be unwarily betrayed into a fondneſs for them, and grow inſenſible to the charms of that virtue, which they were deſigned to recommend. But then he conſtantly labours to convince his readers that *her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and that her paths are peace:* not indeed that they do and will bring us at laſt to any pleaſure and

to any peace distinct from what attends us in our passage; but that they are pleasant and peaceful in themselves. He never represents the practice of virtue as prejudicial to our real interests and true happiness, these he grants are what must constantly determine us; and the only question that we differ about is,—where they are to be found. The voluptuous man tryes to find them in the loose pleasures of sensuality or in the mad sallies of intemperance: the indolent man does not pursue them, but expects that they will follow him to his unactive retirement: the Christian assures himself that he shall meet with them in that fulness of joy, with which God has promised to reward his obedience: and Lord Shaftesbury maintains that the practice of virtue, or the exercise of the benevolent affections in doing good to mankind is in itself, without looking any farther, our real happiness and truest interest: this he bids us follow and does not talk of any other beauty in virtue, which is worth our notice; this is the good, that he would have us look for in it; and these are the only charms, that, in his opinion, recommend it to our esteem and love. Thus at last the good, which he saw in virtue, and would have us see too, is a self-good: and the great difference between him and those, who profess themselves to be the disciples of Christ with less reserve than he did, is no more than this,—he followed virtue

Cause

cause it is happiness, they follow it because it leads to happiness.

Other moralists there are, who define "*natural good* to be that which is good for us, and *moral good* that which is good in itself," and maintain that "virtue is the ultimate end of a moral agent in the strictest sense, for in this his view is terminated and he pursues it so entirely upon its own account and for its own sake, that though in the pursuit of pleasure *self* is not only regarded and included but is perpetually uppermost, yet in the pursuit of virtue, *self* is quite overlooked: a perfect moral agent, unmindful of himself, keeps his thoughts fixed on the worth and dignity of his object; that he acts virtuously, not because it is profitable or pleasing, but because it is in itself right and fit so to do." "For there are, we are told, "certain eternal and necessary differences of things, which make it fit and reasonable for creatures to behave agreeably to the rules of justice, equity, goodness and truth, which cause it to be their duty, or lay an obligation upon them so to act, even separate from the consideration of these rules being the positive will or command of God, and also antecedent to any respect or regard, expectation or apprehension of any particular private and personal advantage or disadvantage, reward or punishment,

Balguy's tracts p. 376

pag. 13[illegible].

Clarke's Boyle's lect. 174.

" either present or future; annexed either by na-
" tural consequence or by positive appointment
" to the practising or neglecting of these rules."

It is certain that these writers propose virtue as an end of action independent of all regard to self-good, and describe it as a rule, which we are obliged to obey, though it was unenforced by any considerations of our own happiness. Many perhaps will think them in the right, though I have endeavoured in another place to shew they are not so. But granting for the present, that virtue is to be pursued for its own sake, and that we ought to do good to our fellow-creatures, though our own happiness neither consisted in thus obeying the natural affections, which we have for mankind, nor was annexed to this behaviour by the appointment of our Creator: yet virtue or public good cannot with any propriety be called the ultimate end of action; unless they had proved, what they never attempt to prove, *that it ought to be so practised as not to be referred to any thing else, but so as that every thing else should be referred to it:* this is the description which [i] Cicero has given of an ultimate end, but I do not find that the moralists I am speaking of make virtue alone agree to either part of it. In their opinion

Clarke's Boyle's lect. p. 258.

[i] Quaerimus igitur quid sit extremum et ultimum bonorum: omnium philosophorum sententia tale debet esse, ut ad id omnia referri oporteat; ipsum autem nusquam. De. fin. l. 1. 9.

" neither

"neither possible nor truly reasonable, that men "by adhering to virtue should part with their "lives, if thereby they eternally deprived them-"selves of all possibility of receiving any advan-"tage from that adherence. Virtue, say they, "is true, in its proper sea- and with all its full "effects and consequences unhindered, must be "confessed to be the chief good; as being truly "the enjoyment as well as the imitation of God: "but as the practice of it is circumstantiated in "this present world, and in the present state of "things; 'tis plain it is not itself the chief good, "but only the means to it, as running in a race "is not itself the prize, but the way to obtain it." Thus they allow that virtue ceases to be the chief ---, when it is so circumstanced as to produce ---ry, and that nothing makes it the ultimate end, except that happiness, which is the genuine and natural effect of it. Happiness therefore is at last the point to which in their opinion we must refer even virtue itself: the chief good is no other than a self-good, and whatever other sort of good there may be in virtue, it is eligible only because it is good for us.

The philosophers of this sect do not indeed always confess that it is nothing but happiness, which makes virtue worth pursuing: but they seldom scruple to own, that if its natural consequences are hindered, if it is unattended with hap-

happineſs, we ſhould find it better worth our
Balguy p. 89. while to purſue ſomething elſe. "Though reaſon
" ſay they, (by which they mean virtue) be ſelf-
" eligible, yet ſince we are ſenſible as well as ra-
" tional creatures, reaſon alone can never be ſuf-
" ſufficient: exclude the belief of a provid-
" and a future ſtate, and in many caſes it m-
" be owned, virtue would not be able to ſupport
" itſelf: adverſity and great miſery would make
" men deaf to the dictates of their own mind and
" bring them down, as it were, from reaſon to
" ſenſe." What therefore is it that will always
determine us to the choice of virtue? What makes
it reaſonable in all poſſible circumſtances con-
ſtantly to direct our views to this point and uni-
formly to perſevere in a hearty fondneſs fo- -
Balguy p. 88. 89. ſincere obedience to it's laws? Is it becauſe th-
caſes may be imagined, where virtue would be
miſerable, yet either the providence of God will
take care that thoſe caſes ſhall never happen in
fact, or elſe this all-wiſe and perfect Governor of
the univerſe will make us amends hereafter for
all that we may ſuffer at preſent by our adhe-
rence to virtue?—Tell me therefore; can virtue be
the laſt end of human actions? is the acquiring a
virtuous character all that man deſires, or is it wh-
he moſt deſires? is not he granted to be ſo -
cumſtanced, that, unleſs the belief of a providenc
and a future ſtate gave him aſſurance that t-
prac-

practice of virtue would make him finally happy, something would interpose more dear to him and more desireable than virtue? for if not more dear to him, if not more desireable, could he give up virtue for the sake of it, or once think of sacrificing his ultimate end to one of an inferiour sort? — Virtue, they may say, will in better times exert its supremacy, and when it is attended with it's genuine effects, when none of it's natural consequences are hindered, we shall steadily pursue it for it's own sake; and shall acknowledge it to be what it is now, whether we perceive it or no, the last end to which a moral agent, that would behave agreeably to a rational nature, must direct all it's actions. Let this be the case; and with what propriety can virtue be called the ultimate end? If human nature will shrink back when virtue fails of producing happiness, and will rather give it up with all it's charms about it than suffer us to make ourselves miserable; if we never steadily adhere to it, but when it cannot interfere with our happiness in fact, whatever it may do in speculation, then certainly in the pursuit of virtue *self* is not quite overlook'd. For however amiable it may be; yet, since we cannot be fond of it whilst it makes us miserable; we must have our eyes upon something beyond it: as it is not self-sufficient unless where it is attended with happiness, our principal aim or ultimate end is happiness and not virtue.

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Balguy p.91. " The Stoics, it is ſaid, had noble ideas of vir-
" tue, and clear apprehenſions of it's excellence,
" but unaccountably forgot or overlooked the
" conſtitution of human nature: and hence they
" fell into great extravagance and a kind of en-
" thuſiaſm: wrapt up in admiration of moral
" good, they ſeemed not to acknowledge or re-
" gard any other: had they conſidered that they
" were ſenſible beings as well as moral, they could
" not eaſily have imagined that virtue alone was
" ſelf-ſufficient: their ſcheme therefore muſt be
" unnatural and indefenſible excluſively of a
" future ſtate, the only ſupport of virtue in ad-
" verſity and extreme caſes." Here indeed I muſt beg leave to diſagree from this ingenious writer in one particular, for if moral good is that only which is good in itſelf, and natural good diſtinguiſhed from it by being good for us; then the Stoics were ſo far from being wrapt up in admiration of it, that they ſeem to have had no ſuch notion of good: they were ſo far from acknowledging or regarding no other, that the peculiarity of their opinion conſiſted in affirming that virtue is the only natural good, or the only thing that is good for us; and when they called it abſolutely good or good in itſelf, they only meant, that without any foreign aid, without having recourſe to any thing elſe, virtue is alone ſufficient to make us happy or rather that virtue itſelf is our only happineſs. But in the point that

I am

I am endeavouring to establish we agree exactly. For they, who maintain that the Stoical opinion, as it is commonly represented, cannot be defended exclusively of a future state, they, who think it unnatural to pursue virtue when we must be miserable for so doing, unless some amends is to be made us hereafter, have plainly something beyond virtue in their view and ultimately refer even virtue itself to happiness.

Thus we find that they, who are fond of contradicting each other, who dispute every inch of ground and never give up a single point, till they can maintain it no longer, who profess to examine every thing with the utmost nicety and after the strictest enquiries agree in nothing else, are *all* of them *unanimous* in allowing *that every man's own happiness is the proper end of all his actions.* Nay, when they seem to set out upon principles the most opposite to this, they are forced to come round to this at last; and dispute themselves into the truth of what they were endeavouring to prove false. It is impossible that so remarkable a concurrence should be owing to any thing but the voice of reason. None but it's clearest dictates could appear so uniformly in all the contending sects: or rather nothing but a self-evident truth could be so powerful as to extort in this manner obedience and submission even from the most unwilling.

CHAP. IX.

We want a guide to teach us what our happiness is. No happiness in the mere act of virtue, nor any annexed to it by necessary consequence can be the cause of moral obligation exclusively of God and his providence.

See c. VIII. IT is agreed, that the good of each particular man is his ultimate end: but where he will find this good is the question. Nature and reason bid him pursue it; but will either nature or reason sufficiently direct him in the pursuit? If these guides fail him, where he has most occasion for their assistance; if they do but little more than suggest to him that he should follow happiness and then leave him to be disappointed without giving him proper information what his happiness consists in or where he should look for it; are there any other guides, that can be applyed to, and Cic. de fin. l. 2. 10. that are better able to instruct him? Epicurus bids him court the pleasures of sense; and Hieronymus cautions him to avoid pain. The Stoic says follow nature or, which is the same thing in his opinion, practise virtue. The Peripatetic too says follow nature, but means by it, adhere steadily to virtue, for this is the best condition of the mind; and take care at the same time to secure all the advantages of

of body and of fortune, for, as man consists of body as well as mind, to make him happy both must be consulted, and to follow nature is to humour both.

Here therefore we have no one sect of philosophers, whose opinion may be safely subscribed to. In the former enquiry though we set out with a small appearance on our side; yet, before we came to a conclusion, all the different sects crouded in upon us and owned at last that happiness is the ultimate end. But if we ask what happiness is, or where we are to look for it; we meet with no sort of satisfaction; but have as many different schemes proposed as there are different tastes in the world: and let us follow what party we will, all the rest are sure to stand out against us for every one is obstinate in the support of what he likes best himself. The obvious conclusion from this great uncertainty, in which we are left by the most indefatigable searchers into human nature, is, that we have no sure way of finding out what is the true happiness of mankind; but that the wisest have occasion to apply to some superiour guide for better directions where to place and how to secure their final good than either experience or reason will afford them.

A man's own experience will go but a little way in directing him where to place his greatest good. If he begins the world without any guide; the odds are so much against him, there are so

many thousand plausible pursuits which will end in disappointment and misery; that we may venture to say it is impossible for him to chuse right at first. He would scarce continue long in a pursuit, which made him unhappy: the uneasiness, that he must feel, would make him sensible that he had chosen wrong, and would put him upon trying something else: but then it could not direct him in his new choice: though it shews him what is wrong, yet it would not shew him what is right. And there are innumerable paths, besides that he first set out in, which all end in disappointments; there are innumerable objects, which are as likely as what he fixed upon in the former tryal, to take with his capricious fancy, and to engage him in another tedious pursuit of something, which will only give him anxiety and disquiet when he has obtained it. Life itself could not be long preserved in this variety of hardship and misery, and in the constant employment of making experiments, which would be fruitless at best and sometimes fatal. And the longest life could not give us an opportunity for all the experience, which is necessary to be had before we can fix and determine what is our true and real good, our proper and greatest happiness. This cannot be done, till we have gone through all the possible changes of our constitution; till we have tryed every scene of things and have discovered

covered, in this unsearchable variety, what is most agreeable to our true and real nature.

Before the ten-thousandth part of this task is over, something may be met with which a man could acquiesce in. Pleasure may dissipate, intemperance may stupify, or business divert him; till he forgets that any thing is wanting to complete his happiness. But if he thinks immediately that he has found what he was looking for; let him wait only till by following his pleasure he has made himself unfit to be trusted in public life and contemptible in private; till he has brought on an untimely old age and a long train of infirmities unfelt by the virtuous: and then perhaps he will be convinced that what he is in possession of is not the greatest good of human nature: or if he still thinks otherwise, the whole world will condemn him and will conclude that he has lost all sense of feeling as well as all reason and judgment. The intemperate man need seldom wait for this to be put in mind that his pursuit is wrong: his remembrancer constantly attends him; and the morning's sickness and head-ach will tell him that the last night's debauch did not suit with his constitution so well as to deserve the high character of being his final happiness. The man of business may have set his mind wholly upon his employment, and may appear as well satisfyed with it as if it was his ultimate good: but all this com-

complacency is owing to the distraction of his mind by the cares of the world, which keep him from attending to any thing else: he acquiesces in his present condition, not because it is the best, but because he is unacquainted with any that is better: and though in his constant hurry he may not be aware of this; yet possibly he may learn it at last under the severe discipline of losses and poverty and in the leisure of an hospital.

Suppose we call in here the assistance of other men, and endeavour to learn from their experience what no one can possibly learn from his own. Will this be of that great service to us, which we might have expected? can another man tell me what is my happiness, till he has given me the same taste that he has? "The mind has a different "relish as well as the palate; and you will as fruit-"lessly endeavour to delight all men with riches or "glory (which yet some men place their happiness "in) as you would to satisfy all men's hunger with "cheese or lobsters, which, though very agreeable "and delicious fare to some, are to others extremely "nauseous and offensive: and many people would "with reason prefer the griping of an hungry belly "to those dishes, which are a feast to others. "When one party of philosophers maintains that "the greatest happiness consists in riches, when "another endeavours to convince me that it is to "be found in bodily delights, and a third that I shall

Lock. B. II. c. 21. s. 55.

"I shall meet with it no where but in virtue or "in contemplation; it is just as reasonable as if "they had divided themselves into sects upon the "taste of apples, plums, and nuts, and each party "had endeavoured to dispute me into their own "relish: for as pleasant tastes depend not on "the things themselves, but on their agreeableness "to this or that palate, wherein there is great "variety; so the greatest happiness consists in the "having those things which produce the greatest "pleasure; and in the absence of those, which "cause any disturbance, any pain: and whilst "these to different men are different things," the experience of one man will be of no great service to another.

The best use, that we can make of another's experience is to learn what we are to avoid and not what we are to pursue. For when we find that the event of something, which is very agreeable to our present taste, has been fatal to many others before us; it is natural to fear that it will be so to us, and to change our inclinations, if we can, in order to avoid an evil, which we see will probably attend the indulgence of them. But to what purpose do we alter our inclinations, unless we knew where to fix them? and in this particular our own experience cannot direct us; because we have no experience but of what we are leaving: and that of other men cannot; because what they

they think happinefs may be taftelefs and infipid to us.

In one inftance we are fure that both their experience and our own muft neceffarily fail us. When we come to die, it is impoffible to know from any thing, which we have tryed here, how our circumftances or how our relifh may alter: what fcene of things we are to pafs through in a world to come, or what changes our conftitution will undergo. The moft agreeable objects, fuch as long ufe may have made quite the darlings of our thoughts whilft we are here, will nor attend us in death; and perhaps be remembered by us hereafter only on account of fome uneafinefs, which we are to feel for the lofs of them. Or if they fhould follow us into another world; we may and moft likely fhall have a new relifh: though the object continues the fame, our temper may vary; and thus what was pleafing and delightful to us before, may grow indifferent or poffibly be horrid and fhocking. Muft we therefore begin again, and try fuch another round of unfatisfactory enjoyments as we have gone through here? and that perhaps only to part with them all again at laft, to be ftripped of all the little knowledge of ourfelves and of the things about us, which we had acquired, and be fent abroad once more with a new tafte into a world, that we are ftrangers in. For neither experience, nor reafon can poffibly have

have assured us that death is the last change, which our constitution is to suffer. For any thing we know, till God, who knows better than we, has informed us; there may be innumerable alterations to be undergone as great as that of death: we may continue for endless ages shifting our abode and passing into a sort of life as different from what we were in before, as the first scene of being, which we are to enter upon at the separation of soul and body, is likely to be from this, which we are in at present: where all our former experience will be of as little use to determine what we shall pursue in our new habitation, as the experience of this life is to inform us what our happiness will consist in after we are dead.

Since then the joynt experience of all mankind will go a very little way in ascertaining our ultimate good; it cannot be expected that reason should be a much better guide. This is an enquiry concerning a matter of fact; and unless we have experience to go upon, our reasonings about it will, as in all cases of the same sort, be conjecture only and supposition; and our nicest refinements, all the pomp of words and shew of argument will be found upon tryal to have been no better than learned trifling.

" The happiness of all beings whatever, says " the author of *Christianity as old as the creation*, " consists in the perfection of their nature; and the Christianity as old as the creat. p. 21.

E e " na-

" nature of a rational being is most perfect when it " is perfectly rational; that is, when it governs all " its actions by the rules of right reason; for then " it arrives to the most perfect and consequently " the happiest state a rational nature can aspire " to: and every deviation from the rules of right " reason being an imperfection must carry with " it a proportionable unhappiness."

However conclusive this argument may appear to be, yet certainly it will never persuade any man to believe that his happiness consists in obeying reason, when he has been constantly disappointed in his best concerted designs; when he has tryed every way to make his being easy and happy, but has failed in all; and when he has carefully followed the dictates of reason, as far as he knew any thing of them, but always without success. It would be very poor comfort to him, and would not add much to the weight of the argument, to tell him that he may indeed have acted prudently, as far as he knows; and may possibly have obeyed what he takes to be reason: but that nothing less than compliance with the highest reason, can make him happy. This is no better than saying that he would have been happy, if he had complyed with the dictates of a reason, which he knows nothing of; or, what amounts to the same, that his happiness is out of his power and consists in something, which he must never hope to arrive at: for this

this must certainly be the case, if it consists in obeying a reason, which is so much higher than his own, as to be quite beyond the reach of his utmost capacity.

Suppose there were some, who had been able to acquaint themselves with the dictates of this highest reason, and to find out what is meant by acting agreeably to them: yet even their happiness would still depend, not so much upon the conformity of their behaviour to these dictates, as upon many other circumstances of life, which are frequently out of their own power, let them act as rationally as they will. The loss of reputation, or the ruin of their fortunes; an hereditary distemper, the disloyalty of a wife, or the ill success of children are accidents, which, if they have any feeling, will allay their happiness, and, if they have no comforts of religion to support them, will make them miserable.

What conclusions may be drawn from metaphysical speculations I will not pretend to determine: but the obvious conclusion from such facts as these is that the sovereign good of human nature does not consist in being perfectly rational. And one would think it impossible for abstract arguments to overrule our own perceptions and the common sense of mankind. They may, when dressed up in the artificial forms of disputation, perplex and silence us: but what is opposed by the clear and intelli-

gible evidence of daily experience can never be convincing enough to influence our conduct. It is a hopeless undertaking to persuade a man that his true happiness consists in something, which cannot prevent him from being miserable at the very time when he knows himself to be in full possession of it. In the calms of life we may sometimes suffer ourselves to be amused with subtilties: but the storms of adversity will soon dissipate all the specious pretences to argument and demonstration, and will shew them to have been no better than air and fallacy. The mechanic, who works by the exact rules of mathematical reasoning, follows truth, and therefore acts rationally: but if this was his sovereign happiness, could he, whilst he is possessed of it, be made miserable by the torture of the stone or by the calamities of his family? If acting rationally was the only true and proper good of man, and acting irrationally was his only ill; then the mariner, when he navigates his ship with perfect art, would be happy; though he finds that in spite of all his skill and labour he must be wrecked, and must perish within sight of the harbour: but would they, who see him from the shore, think him happy? would they, in full assurance that he is then enjoying his greatest good, leave him to the mercy of the waves, without so much as wishing it was in their power to send him relief? They will rather, whilst this example is be-

before their eyes, confess that obedience to truth is not happiness, and that in the midst of all our rational conduct, if this conduct is all we have to enjoy, our condition may be unfortunate and calamitous: they will plainly see that a man may be exact in following the most perfect rule of action, which his nature has taught him, and yet not be possessed of the best condition, of which his nature is capable.

We will grant therefore that *the happiness of all beings whatever consists in the perfection of their nature*: and we will grant farther that *a rational being arrives at the perfection of it's nature when it is perfectly rational.* But *perfection of nature* is here used in very different senses: when this is said to constitute the happiness of all beings whatever, it means their most natural condition: when a rational being is said to arrive at the perfection of it's nature by governing all it's actions according to the rules of right reason, perfection of nature means the most natural rule of action. And as they, whose experience has taught them that a man may obey reason and yet be miserable, are aware of a distinction between perfect condition of being and perfect scheme of behaviour; they will perceive that acting rationally may be called the perfection of our nature and yet not be the same thing as happiness.

Reason

Reason however, has another province besides that of discovering truth. By this faculty of the mind we discern, as well as we can, *what actions make for and what make against our happiness.* In this use of the word, we govern all our actions by the rules of right reason if we take the proper steps towards making ourselves happy. And though to be perfectly rational cannot with propriety be called the greatest good, when this perfection of reason is not itself the good, which we seek after, but is only the means of obtaining it; yet we will not dispute about the propriety of an expression: I will grant that he, who is perfectly rational in this sense, actually enjoys happiness; though it would be more proper to say that he is in the sure way to obtain it. But when I ask what my true and final happiness is; if I am answered that it is the condition, which I shall certainly arrive at by acting rationally; I could make no use of this information, till I had enquired farther what is meant by acting rationally. And if my instructor was to reply that rational behaviour consists in being careful to do nothing, which can make me miserable, and to omit nothing, which can make me happy; I should go away neither the happier nor the wiser. This is no better than taking pains to bring me round to the point from whence I set out. He neither shews me what happiness is, nor puts me into the path, which

Christian. as old as the cr. at. p. 22.

which leads to it: he only tells me, with much appearance of instruction, what I did not want to be informed of; that I shall meet with happiness, if I look where it is to be found, and shall put myself in possession of it by using such means as never fail to obtain it.

The practice of virtue may be called rational behaviour in their language, who see virtue in the same light that the Stoics did, who without attending to the beneficial consequences of it in this life or to the rewards which God will bestow upon the virtuous in another, consider it as the final good of man or the most complete enjoyment, of which human nature is capable. And here the moralist must leave his abstracted disputation, and must return once more to matter of fact and experience: where he will meet with the same difficulties, which by taking us from sense to refined speculations he thought to have avoided. Deductions of reason may be of service in tracing out the happiness, which will be the consequence of virtue; instruction may shew me that man will love me for it or God reward me: but he who contends that virtue is happiness, must make me actually feel the truth of what he says, before he can make me own it. See c. VIII.

They who imagine their arguments are sufficient to convince a man, that he will find any exquisite pleasure or any solid enjoyment in the exercise

of

of virtue, before he has experienced it, would do well to try the ſtrength of them firſt in ſome lower inſtance. Let them try to convince him in the ſame manner that he will be delighted with the taſte of olives or with the ſmell of aſſa foetida. And if they fail here, as they certainly will; how can they expect that ſuch reaſoning as has no weight with him in trifles ſhould be able to turn the ſcale in caſes of the laſt importance? At the moſt they will only prevail upon him to be virtuous for a while, in order to ſee what ſatisfaction there is in it: and their beſt argument for this purpoſe would be that they have found complete happineſs in it themſelves and therefore believe that he will find the ſame.

But, when they appeal to fact, do they ſay any ſuch thing? do not they confeſs that "in this life "we cannot be perfectly happy as ſubject to diſ-"eaſes and diſaſters?" how then can it be our ſovereign good to obey the dictates of right reaſon? Whatever they mean by the word reaſon, which has unfortunately been rendered a little uncertain in it's uſe; whether it is deſigned to ſtand for the faculty of the mind, which we exerciſe in contemplation, or for the imaginary object which they purſue, who in compliance with fitneſs and rectitude are diſintereſtedly virtuous; whether to act rationally is to regulate our conduct by true propoſitions of any ſort, or to uſe

Chriſtian, as old as the creat. p. 25.

use sensible beings agreeably to their nature and to the relations subsisting between us and them, which is sometimes called the reason of things and has been mistakenly set up for the standard of virtue: in either of these senses mere conformity to reason cannot be in itself the chief happiness of man. The rational and the virtuous are confessedly not exempted from distempers of the body or from the outrages of fortune; they are in some instances more fatally exposed to them than the trifling and the vicious: and as far as they fall within the power of these calamities, let their behaviour be ever so exact, they will find themselves unhappy. See pag. 13. 123.

In what manner will their instructors, after this experience and their own confession, attempt to satisfy them, not that obedience to reason will procure happiness by the favour of God, but that the very act of obedience is in itself the highest gratification, the principal enjoyment, and final good? They may urge that we are imperfect our- " selves, and have none to converse with but imper- " fect creatures; and yet if we act according to the " dictates of right reason, we shall receive, even " here, true inward comfort and satisfaction, and " hereafter, when we are freed from these imper- " fections, complete happiness."—But may not this ray of inward peace and satisfaction, which breaks in upon the mind of the virtuous man Christian. as old as the creat. p. 25.

through the gloom of his misfortunes, be derived rather from his future expectations than from his present enjoyments? virtue may be his comfort without being his bliss; and he may receive delight from such actions as are well done, not because they give him happiness in the performance, but because he knows himself to be doing what will secure his happiness at last.

Or suppose there should be any other source of this complacency; suppose it to be the immediate and necessary effect of behaving well: yet the influence of it will not oblige even the few, who feel it, to be virtuous whilst they continue here. When a man's guides have assured him, what all moralists are agreed in, and what he is very ready to close in with, that self-good is the ultimate end of action, and that "no one can be obliged to do "any thing, which does not some way or other "contribute to his happiness:" if they go on to remind him that he feels satisfaction and complacency in the exercise of virtue, and to persuade him that upon these principles he is obliged to be virtuous; might not he fairly object that he has indeed experienced the satisfaction, which they speak of, but finds himself surrounded with many infirmities, which virtue cannot remove; subject to many calamities, which it cannot guard him from, but often brings upon him; and oppressed with many wants, which it sometimes exposes him

Christian. as old as the creat. p. 23.

him to, but scarce ever relieves? He would not be satisfyed with being told that he must sacrifice all his other enjoyments to this single one, and must court this happiness though attended with ever so many hardships. For might not he reasonably ask why he must do this? might not he tell them that for any thing, which appears to him, he may as well be vicious? since the worst they can say of vice is that it brings more pain than pleasure with it; and his experience has taught him that this is the case of virtue. If they encourage him to hope that there will come a time, when he shall be set beyond the reach of disasters, and when the happiness of acting rationally shall be no longer allayed by any uneasiness or pain, he would be apt to desire them to excuse his being virtuous, till that time comes. If they allow that he is to pursue nothing but happiness, he will think it a little unreasonable to expect that he should practise virtue, though it makes him miserable; only because it pleases his palate now, and will, when his condition is improved, afford him a more uninterrupted and a higher satisfaction. This would be much the same as if a physician, who knew that giving his patient wine in a fever would encrease the disorder, should, notwithstanding this, direct him to drink it, and assure him that the practice must be safe and good; because the distemper has not spoiled his

relish for it, and because when he has recovered his health it will agree with him very well. The physician's advice would be proper, if wine, though it encreased the disorder at first, would carry it off in the end. And the moralists advice would be proper too; if virtue, though at present in very disadvantagious circumstances, had a natural tendency to better it's own situation; if it could by frequent exercise acquire sufficient strength to throw off in another life all the calamities, which oppress it in this, and could improve itself into perfect happiness. But the only change, which our constitution appears to undergo in the ordinary course of things, is brought about by death and not by virtue: and this is such a shock of our whole frame as may possibly take from us some of our present enjoyments, and may spoil our relish for the rest: it does not seem very likely, without the immediate interposition and favour of God, that the separation of soul and body will either give us any new enjoyments instead of those, which it deprives us of, or make any improvements in those, which it leaves behind

Thus all our enquiries will end in uncertainty; when we search into our future condition without taking God for our guide: when we venture to define the nature and substance of a happiness, which we have never experienced; and pretend to have discovered a method of obtaining our final good

good without any instructions from our Creator, who alone can tell what changes are to be made hereafter in our nature and circumstances; and without the assistance of our Almighty Preserver, who gave us the comforts of this life, and who alone is able to provide for us the happiness of the next.

What assurances we have that God will take care to put the virtuous in possession of their final good, is a question of great importance, and shall be examined in it's proper place. At present I only want to shew that virtue is not able without the favour of God to support itself by making it's votaries happy. We have seen that the mere act of being either rational or virtuous is not our true and sole happiness, whilst we continue here; that the free and uninterrupted exercise of virtue is not likely to be the only future reward and final good of man; and that there is no reason to expect it should by it's own natural working improve itself into perfect bliss. But if virtue, though it is not happiness, would always procure happiness in this life for those who adhere to it; if vice, though it is not misery, was sure by the present constitution of things to be attended with misery in it's consequences; some men might think it of no importance to virtue to determine whether the world was originally the effect of chance or the work of God; whether fate and necessity fixed the laws of nature or God appointed them; and whether

whether all our views are terminated by the grave or may reasonably be extended to a better and a fairer prospect beyond it. Or even when they had determined wrong upon any of these questions, they might still pretend to act upon steady and certain principles, and might represent the pursuit of pleasure and of temporal good as sufficient to furnish them with constant reasons for an uniform practice of virtue towards all mankind.

Certainly there are very considerable advantages in being virtuous and many inconveniencies are to be feared from being vicious. Temperance and chastity and moderation of the passions conduce to the preservation of our health, and to the lengthening of our days. The contrary vices bring pain and diseases upon us; they consume our body, waste our fortune, and render us both uneasy to ourselves and contemptible to others. Truth and an open sincerity are often found to be sure ways of thriving, when all the little arts of crafty management have failed. Justice and humanity keep our interests united to those of our species, and recommend us very strongly to the kindness and favour of mankind, whenever we stand in need of it. The condition of the poor and helpless will be insupportable, if by treachery and cruelty they have made themselves many enemies. And even the rich and powerful are miserable enough, when their behaviour has forced them to live without friend-

friendship, and without conjugal affection; disregarded by their children, despised by their servants, and hated by their neighbours.

Thus far the Christian moralist, in his attempts to reform the vicious, may with great strength and propriety reason upon the plan of Epicurus. But after he has removed their prejudices, and has made them virtuous by shewing them the present advantages of such a conduct; if he would extend their virtue to all mankind and would keep them steady in the practice of it, he must teach them better principles than these. Motives of temporal interest, like the principles, which keep a den of robbers together, can engage men to be just only towards the people of their own clan; towards them, whose assistance they may have occasion for, or whose power they are afraid of.

There must be something besides the common inconveniencies of injustice to restrain a number of men, who are sufficiently provided with whatever is necessary to make them as happy as they desire to be, and who are able to defend themselves against all that are likely to attack them. The pyrate Angria does not suffer more for his villainy than the Spartans suffered amidst all their virtue. The rigid policy of their lawgiver, by obliging them to fare hardly and to be constantly under arms, introduced a much worse way of life amongst them than the companions and partners of one, who is a common ene-

Plutarch. de institut. Lacon. et in vit. Lycurg.

enemy to the reſt of the world, need ſubmit to. Theſe robbers may be prepared to defend themſelves againſt the bad conſequences of all the rapine and violence, which they and their leader are guilty of; and yet may live in greater plenty than the ſubjects of Lycurgus did, and may be leſs haraſſed than they were. Angria has ſome reaſon to be afraid of thoſe, who would bring him to juſtice: but then the Spartans had as much reaſon to be afraid of thoſe, who would plunder them. His ſituation contributes more to his ſafety than their virtue did to theirs: and his little ſtrength, in the part of the world where he is ſettled, is as good a ſecurity for him againſt the enemies, which his injuries have made; as the exactneſs of their diſcipline could be for them againſt the deſigns of their ambitious neighbours.

The intereſts of a great part of our ſpecies may be ſo wholly diſunited from ours that they will never have it in their power either to hurt us by their hatred or to better us by their love: and there may at the ſame time be no one, who will diſcharge their debt of gratitude or will revenge their quarrel for them. The Spaniſh nation may be the worſe for it's ſettlements in America: the vaſt quantities of wealth imported in ſpecie may have made the people too idle to cultivate the land and to carry on a regular trade. But theſe inconveniencies, even ſuppoſing them to be made amends for no other

way,

way, are owing to their having settlements there at all; they have suffered little or nothing for their injustice in seizing the lands of the Americans and for their cruel treatment of the old inhabitants. The army, which the public maintains for the defence of their colonies, is not greater than most nations upon the continent of Europe are obliged to keep up at home for the security of possessions fairly gotten: for when we are liable to suffer by the injustice of our neighbours, we must be at as great an expence in defending ourselves, as if we had deserved to suffer for our own. The great mortality amongst the soldiery in the West Indies is owing to the climate and not to the crimes of the people concerned: and the necessary supplies of men do not draw off so many of the inhabitants from old Spain as to leave the nation unable to defend itself. Some blood indeed was spilt in making those settlements; but whose blood was it? many of them who shared deepest in the injustice sat peaceably at home and enjoyed what was purchased by the lives of those poor wretches, who being pressed into the service by force or driven into it by the necessities of a low condition, were involved in a guilt, which did not belong to them. But superiour strength on one side and submission on the other soon took off all restraints arising from the hopes of temporal advantage or from the fear of temporal ill, and would have put

an end to the influence of any ſuch motives, though it had been greater than it was. What reaſons from preſent intereſt could prevent the wanton barbarity of the conquerours? or what are the calamitous conſequences, which have actually attended it? The Europeans do not make themſelves parties in the quarrel of the Indians; we continue to trade and to make alliances with the Spaniards, juſt as we uſed to do before; and their words will paſs as far and their intereſts are as well ſupported as thoſe of any other nation whatſoever.

Parth. de las Caſas Crudelitates Hiſpan.

Even thoſe, who are united in the ſame ſociety, find each other's virtue ſometimes betrayed and always but weakly ſupported upon motives of honours or pleaſure or profit. A man's own friends and his own party may poſſibly look cool upon him for a while, after he has been guilty of any thing notoriouſly wrong: but then they excuſe him too ſoon themſelves, and engage warmly in his defence againſt all others, who behave to him or ſpeak of him as one that has ſet up an intereſt oppoſite to the good of mankind, and that deſerves to be treated as a common enemy. Hence it is that we ſee ſo few with an extenſive influence, with power or cunning enough to keep out of the reach of the law, and with wealth enough to ſet them free from the apprehenſions of ordinary calamities, who can be reſtrained by any motives except religious ones: and the uſual behaviour of ſuch

such, as by the assistance of certain minute philosophers have released themselves from these ties, may be sufficient to shew us how necessary the firm belief of God and His providence is to the very being of virtue.

But, with less power and less wealth, with a weaker party and fewer friends, the danger of suffering any harm in this world for crimes committed in private is too little to prevent them. It may be impossible to have demonstration that what is unjustly done will be for ever concealed: but how do men act when they have no other views but of temporal advantage? do they wait for certainty or take up with likelihood? Does not the farmer hire upon the probability of making three rents? and does not the merchant risque his fortune without having demonstration that his ships will return safe? Nay when the advantage, if we succeed, is very great, and what we lose, if we are disappointed, is of comparatively small value to us; this often makes amends for the want of probability, and we engage without scruple in undertakings where the chances are vastly against us. An inferiour officer in the army, who has learned to set a much higher value upon honour and a good income than even upon life itself without them, would voluntarily offer his service in the most desperate attempt, when he was assured of being rewarded with a regiment for

his pains, if he came off with success. The readiness, with which our public lotteries are filled, is a proof that great numbers of people are willing to venture a part of their fortune upon the prodigiously uncertain chance of being made easy for life by a prize-ticket. And I see no reason to believe that men will act differently where virtue and vice are concerned from what they do in common life; if in both cases they are pursuing the same end, and are governed in both by the same motives.

If we are fond of health and of life, we must be temperate and chaste; if we would have few enemies, we must be just and honest; if we would have many friends, we must be humane and courteous. But were these desires made our ruling principle, they would frequently lead us to something else besides virtue. We may hurt our constitution by making ourselves useful to mankind, and may shorten our days by actions truly good and noble. Can they be constantly virtuous, who have no other view in being so but the advancement of their present interests? Are there no circumstances, in which it is impossible for these hopes to bear them out? What must they do when their virtues are the cause of their misery; when their brightest and fairest actions become *sanctifyed and holy traytors to them?* If the whole of their obligation depends upon temporal happiness

See p. 11. 12. 17.

pineſs, the rack or the wheel will diſſolve it: and the threatenings of a tyrant or the madneſs of the people will not only extort their virtue from them; but will, upon theſe principles, make a voluntary deſertion of it right and reaſonable.

Thus has the infinitely wiſe God ſo contrived the order of things and the conſtitution of man, that communicating happineſs to others is a likely way to procure it for ourſelves. But to keep the government of the moral world in his own hands, He ſeems to have left ſome caſes purpoſely unprovided for He has given us in this life ſo much good as may ſerve to make us thankful, but not enough to make us independent: He has cauſed that virtue, which generally produces happineſs to thoſe who practiſe it, ſhould often fail and ſhould ſometimes make them miſerable.

And now, if I have proved that there are no affections for virtue naturally implanted in man or none but what may eaſily be worn out; that there is no intrinſic fitneſs or rectitude in virtue, which can make it, in it's own nature and upon it's own account, the conſtant object of our choice; that neither nature nor reaſon will teach men ſteadily to purſue any thing but ſelf-good; and that the final happineſs of man does not conſiſt merely in acting virtuouſly, nor can be neceſſarily obtained, either here or hereafter, by the ſole efficacy of virtue excluſively of God and His providence;

dence; in short if I have proved that there is nothing either in the nature of man or in the nature of the thing itself, which should oblige us to be virtuous, the reader will allow me to conclude that we must in settling this point have recourse to the will and appointments of our Creator, and that the true principles of moral obligation are unknown both to the atheist and to the fatalist, to them who are *foolish* enough *to say there is no God*, and to them who think of being made happy without His immediate assistance.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The constant and uniform practice of virtue towards all mankind becomes our duty, when revelation has informed us that God will make us finally happy for it in a life after this.

WHoever affirms, that it is the duty of men to keep their promises and compacts, let him be of what sect he will, means that men ought to do this, or that they are obliged to it. The great dispute between the several parties in morality has been concerning the cause of duty : as to the notion of it or the meaning of the word *duty* they seem to be all very well agreed. " If a Christian, Locke's essay B. 1. c. 3. s. 5.
" who has the view of happiness and misery in " another life, be asked why a man must keep " his word, he will give this as a reason; because " God, who has the power of eternal life and " death, requires it of us. But if an Hobbist be " asked why, he will answer, because the public " requires it, and the Leviathan will punish you " if you do not. And if one of the old heathen " philosophers had been asked, he would have " answered, because it was dishonest, below the " dignity of a man and opposite to virtue, the " highest perfection of human nature, to do other-" wise." In every other instance of virtue as well

as

as in this, each moralist endeavours to make out the obligation to practise it from the principles of his own sect: but after they have done this in such a manner as to satisfy themselves; they all conclude alike, that it is our duty; and therefore all of them use the word *duty* in the same sense, and mean by it *that behaviour to which we are obliged.*

Virtue is our duty or we are obliged to be virtuous, as far as we are assured that God requires it of us and designs to make us happy for it. Let us therefore consider by what means we can discover his will in this particular; whether by our own reasoning upon what we see now, or only by his express declaration of what shall be hereafter.

The law, that God hath set to himself to work by, appears the plainest in the laws observed by what are called natural agents, "by those parts "of the creation, which keep the law of their "kind unwittingly, as the heavens and elements. "For as things natural cannot deviate from his "appointment or do any otherwise than they do; "that law, the performance whereof we behold "in them, is, as it were, an authentical or origi-"nal draught written in the bosom of God him-"self: and every natural agent may be looked "upon as no other than an instrument created "by him at the beginning and ever since the be-"ginning

Hooker B. 1. sect. 3.

"ginning used by Him to work His own will and
"pleasure withal."

Among natural agents I would include brutes. See pag. 68. For though brutes have, as far as appears, a power of chusing and of acting with design; yet, whether it is, because an uniform instinct guides their will, or because their reason is so narrow as to set before them very few objects to chuse out of, their manner of working is almost as constant and regular as that of the heavens and elements: there is so little variety in their choice, that it is scarce possible for the most common observer to be mistaken either in the ends, which they will pursue, or in the means, which they will make use of.

To trace out the will of God from the works of creation, to shew from the contrivance of the natural world that He who made it had the happiness of His creatures in view, would carry me off too far from the present purpose; and the great industry and sagacity of those, who have written upon this subject already, will excuse me from saying much about it. The discontentedness of mankind has indeed made it necessary to say something: but then the less will be sufficient, because they shew by their fondness for life that they think the happiness of this world worth living for. Thus more than half the business is done to our hands: men are already convinced that God is the author of much good; and all they want

to be satisfied about is that the evils, which sometimes arise out of what are ordinarily the causes of good, were never in the design and intention of Him, who made all things at first, and who appointed the laws, by which all things are governed.

In the natural world there are some things, which do us harm, amongst the many, which do us good. Particular men are frequently the worse for that law of gravitation, to which we owe the harmony of the system. The materials of tempests are carried up into the air with those vapours, which descend in dews and showers. The winds may shipwreck our fortunes as well as bring home our treasure: nor do they always purify the air: it is possible for them to bring pestilence and death. Poison is to be met with as well as food or physic. And whilst some animals supply us with clothing, or labour for us, or minister to our pleasures; there are others, which may, by devouring the fruits of the earth, deprive us of our sustenance, which may injure our health or shorten our lives. But though laws, which are plainly calculated for the general good, are sometimes the occasion of partial evil; yet this is no objection to the goodness of their author. By our own care and management, that is, by the use of those means which God has put into our hands, much of this evil may be avoided: and all of it is so

Shaw's travels p. 256.

slight,

ſlight, when compared with the happineſs produced by the ſame laws, as to make it infinitely better to bear with the inconveniencies than to want the advantages of them. But ſince no laws, where imperfect creatures are concerned in the effects and adminiſtration of them, can ever exactly anſwer the purpoſes of the law-maker; we muſt judge of his deſign by the general tendency of his appointments: and whoever has leiſure to take a diſtinct view of the laws eſtabliſhed for the government of the natural world, will find abundant reaſon to conclude that they were intended by their Author to advance the happineſs of his creatures, and that, when they fail of producing this end, it is the inſtrument which fails, and not the will of Him who makes uſe of it.

Men are intellectual and voluntary agents, and have a knowledge and reaſon more extenſive than the brutes have: they are neither tied down by neceſſity to one certain form and manner of working, nor confined within ſo narrow a compaſs as to be naturally conſtant and uniform in their behaviour. Theſe faculties of reaſon and liberty have put many parts of the world under the direction of man; they have enabled him to improve the groſs materials, which nature furniſhes him with, and to make them ſerve for his uſe and happineſs, much farther than they could have done without his art and cultivation. He cannot indeed change

the laws of nature; he has it not in his power either to eſtabliſh new ones, or to repeal thoſe, which are made already: but it is he that muſt execute them, or apply them to the ſeveral purpoſes for which their Author intended them. Whatever food we have better than nuts and acorns; whatever raiment better than leaves and skins; whatever habitation better than woods and caves; in a word, whatever makes a civilized life preferable to a ſavage one, we owe it all to the exerciſe of thoſe ſuperiour faculties, which diſtinguiſh mankind from all the other parts of the creation. Though nature gave ſtrength to the ox and ſwiftneſs to the horſe; yet far the greateſt part of the ſervice, which we have from them, is due to the skill and labour of thoſe, who break them. The ſheep and the ſilk-worm produce the materials for clothing; but they, who manufacture theſe materials, make them uſeful. The ploughman, the reaper, the threſher and the baker all contribute to the bread we eat. Timber for ſhipping and ſtones for building are provided ready to our hands; but we muſt dig and work the ſtones, we muſt fell and frame the timber before we can uſe them. And ſuch is the exquiſite contrivance of the Creator; that, whilſt particular men, for the purpoſes of common life and their own ſubſiſtence, are exerciſed in arts and trades converſant about ſeveral parts of nature, others will find

find advantage from their contrivance and labour: for the good which they produce is not confined to themselves, it is diffusive enough to extend itself to all.

Men considered in this regard are parts of the natural world: but God by giving them reason, and freedom of will, has made them the superiour and in some sense the governing parts of it. And since to these faculties we owe the invention and improvement of such trades and manufactures as are useful to human society, and of such arts and sciences as are ornamental to it; since the Creator of the world, by giving us wisdom to contrive and power to execute, has made all His other gifts worth our acceptance and fit for Him to bestow, it is plain that He has worked for the same end here as every where else, for the general good and happiness of his creatures. The heavens and elements, the instinct of brutes, and the superiour reason and freedom of will bestowed upon men, though each in different sort and manner, yet all by the same uniform appointment of their Maker are subservient to this gracious purpose.

When men are considered as capable of acting with design and of perceiving reasons for preferring one sort of conduct to it's opposite; they make up what is called the *moral world*, that is, *a society of moral agents, or of beings, which have be-* See pag. 61, 69.

behaviour: And if God has furnished us with constant reasons for being uniformly virtuous towards our whole species; then virtue is that law, which He designed for the government of the moral world, and men are obliged to practise it.

In the laws, which are observed by every part of the natural world, whether things inanimate, or brutes, or men, we see in plain and legible characters the design of Him, who established those laws at first by His wisdom, and who upholds them by His providence. Inanimate matter and the brute creation are by the appointment and direction of their Maker fruitful of good. And man whilst without any farther regard he is labouring for his own advantage, naturally produces a happiness which takes in great part of the species. The trade or business, which each one follows for his own subsistence, not only maintains himself and his family, but supplies others with the conveniencies and comforts of living: every improvement in art and knowledge, though made originally for his own sake alone, will in the end be of use and benefit to thousands. Man as a part of the moral world can designedly extend this good or restrain it. God has supplied him with the materials of food and raiment, and has given him such faculties as will enable him to make use of these materials to their respective purposes. But still the practice of virtue is the only channel through which the author

Author of these blessings conveys them, in the ordinary course of providence, to many of His creatures. It is left to the benevolent hand *to give bread to the hungry and to cover the naked with a garment.* The wanton dulness of sensuality, as well as the present rage of intemperance, the peevish sickness, which it leaves behind, or the fixed stupidity, which it introduces at last, will disqualify a man for the offices of his station; they will make him an useless or perhaps a hurtful part of the natural world, and by this means will interrupt the end, which God works for. The incendiary and the assassin, who *cast fire brands, arrows, and death*, produce evil out of materials which, in their ordinary ways of working, serve for the most beneficial purposes, and which seem therefore to have been intended by their Creator for good. In almost every instance we may perceive in the same manner that the laws appointed for the government of the natural world are under the direction and administration of the moral one: upon our care it frequently depends that these laws answer their several purposes; through our neglect what was ordained for good may fail of accomplishing it, and by our perverseness the best institutions may be made to produce evil. Thus in one sense the virtuous act agreeably to the will of God; for they comply with that rule, by which He wills to act Himself.

But

But are we obliged to pursue the same end that He pursues? is the law, which He expects we should obey, the same that He has set to Himself to work by? Though we may be sure from the constitution of things that the practice of virtue is doing what God wills to do Himself; can we from thence conclude, either that we are obliged to be virtuous, or that this practice is doing what He wills we should do? Such a conduct may be the law of His nature without being the law of our's: He may have made such appointments in the natural world as advance the general good. without requiring that each person in the moral world should make it his business to deal out this good to particulars.

Man is sometimes vain and partial enough to imagine that the care and favours of his Creator are confined to him alone: but the beautiful instructions of the moral Poet will teach him to enlarge his views and to think more justly of God and more humbly of himself.

Pope's Essay on Man. Ep. III. lin. 27.—42.

" Has God, thou fool, work'd solely for thy good,
" Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?
" Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
" For him as kindly spread the flow'ry lawn.
" Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?
" Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
" Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?
" Loves of his own, and raptures swell the note.

" The

"The bounding steed you pompously bestride
"Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
"Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?
"The birds of heav'n shall vindicate their grain.
"Thine the full harvest of the golden year?
"Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer.
"The hog, that plows not, nor obeys thy call,
"Lives on the labour of this lord of all."

Nay whilst man himself, considered as a part of the natural world, is labouring without any view besides his own profit or pleasure, he produces such a good as makes, not only his own kind, but the creatures below him happy.

"Man cares for all: to birds he gives his woods, ibid. lin. 61.—70.
"To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods:
"For some his int'rest prompts him to provide,
"For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride.
"All feed on one vain patron and enjoy
"Th' extensive blessing of his luxury.
"That very life his learned hunger craves
"He saves from famine, from the savage saves;
"Nay feasts the animal he dooms his feast,
"And till he ends the being makes it blest."

Will any one say, after this view of things, that we are therefore obliged to be virtuous, because God is good? does reason assure us that what He does in the natural world is the measure of that be-

 haviour,

haviour, which he requires from us in the moral one? —— I would not ask why our virtue does not upon these principles extend to brutes as well as to men; because by common use the name *virtue* has been appropriated to that sort of tender and kind behaviour, which respects our own kind in particular: but one may reasonably ask why our *duty* does not extend to all sensible beings alike; why we ought not to have the same regard in every instance for the happiness of the creatures below us, as we have for the welfare and interests of those, which are placed in the same rank with ourselves.

In shewing whence the obligations of virtue arise, or why it is our duty to make our conduct such as will guard and promote the happiness of mankind; you may urge, that, as God could have no design in creating them but their happiness, he must will or require such behaviour as tends to advance their happiness, and this behaviour is virtue. When you are asked, what must be done, if this pursuit should ever happen to be inconsistent with our own happiness, which is the end of action prescribed to us both by nature and reason; you may answer, that it cannot possibly be the worse for us to obey the will of so gracious a being as God is; and therefore we may always conclude that virtue, though it should interfere with our present interests, cannot interfere with our

Prelim. dissert. to King's orig. of evil. pag. 38.

our final good; for he, who expects we should be virtuous, will certainly reward us for it, if not in this life, yet in that which is to come.

But why should you stop here? why will you limit our duty within the bounds of our own species, when your own principles will extend it much farther? If you go on with this reasoning, you will find yourself forced to confess, that our duties reach as far as the relations and fitness of See pag. 128 things would have carried them; and that our obligations towards all sensible beings whatsoever are exactly the same with those towards mankind For if you prove from God's having worked for the good of man, that he could have no design in creating us but our happiness; you may prove, by the same argument, that he could have no design but the happiness of brutes in creating them: and then whether you will agree to call the behaviour, which tends to prevent their misery and to promote their happiness, by the name of *virtue* or not, yet by the same sort of inference you must conclude that God requires this behaviour of us and will reward us for it. Why is not it therefore as criminal to warm ourselves with *the fleece of our sheep* as with *the fleece of the fatherless?* If duty forbids to steal from the farmer that grain, which he has laboured for, to support himself and his children; why does not the same duty forbid to rob the industrious bees of the store

provided by them for their winter's subsistence? Why is the law of nature so much more tender of a man's life than it is of the life of any other sensible creature, that to kill a man purely for our pleasure or advantage is one of the blackest crimes, but to kill an ox in order to eat it, is no crime at all?

We are told indeed that the wise and the civilized think it wrong and cruel to sport with the miseries of brutes.—But what do they, who say this, mean by sporting with their miseries? The wise and the civilized, nay, the good-natured and tender-hearted do not think it wrong or cruel to give them tedious and exquisite pain for their own diversion. The pleasures of the chace are not allayed by any melancholy reflections upon the distresses of the stag, which are, whatever we may pretend, much more than momentary sufferings, to the wretched animal that feels them. Even the savage pastimes of the common people are not looked upon as criminal: and the principal reason for disliking them seems to be of the same sort with that, which, as Quinctilian imagines, determined the Athenian judges, when they condemned the boy for putting out the eyes of his quails: they thought it betrayed such a barbarous disposition in him as many people would suffer by, if they did not take care to prevent it.

De institut. orator. l. v. c. 9.

Since

Since therefore it would be our duty to do good and to avoid doing harm as much where brutes are concerned as where our own ſpecies is, if the end, which God works for, was the ſtandard of what he requires us to obſerve and will make us happy for, if we obſerve it; and ſince no one ſcruples to kill a brute for the ſupport of his own life or to pleaſe his appetite, and very few think it criminal to divert themſelves by giving pain to the animals below them; we muſt conclude that this account of the obligations of virtue is not agreeable to the ſenſe of mankind.

The writers upon the law of nature are of opinion that there is no mutual obligation between brutes and men: becauſe nature, they ſay, does not command us to maintain friendſhip and ſociety with brutes; nor has it enabled any of the animals below the rank of man to be parties in an obligation, to perceive reaſons for conſtantly preferring one ſort of behaviour to another, or to act under a ſenſe of duty. From hence it is inferred, that as there can be no law, which is common to brutes and men, no rule of action, which both parties are equally obliged to obſerve, and as both are able to hurt each other and are upon very probable grounds ſuppoſed to be willing; therefore we are in a ſtate of war with all other animals: and becauſe our's is the ſtronger ſide, we may

Puffendorf on the law of nature &c. B I c.3. ſ.5.

See pag 69.

may do with them whatsoever we think will be conducive to our own interest or convenience.

If maintaining friendship and society with inferiour creatures means contracting such intimacies with them as men make with each other, receiving them as subjects of our states, and admitting them to share in the advantages of civil community; then certainly no law of nature can oblige us to it, because nature has not made them capable of such treatment. But if it means abstaining from what may hurt them, and doing them such good offices as their rank has fitted them to receive; to say that in this sense nature does not command us to maintain friendship and society with other animals, is to take for granted what is the very point in dispute. And it seems to be pretty evident, that the truth of this assertion can never be defended, if we have no way of determining what God requires of us, but by considering the end, which he himself works for. The kindness and beneficence of the Creator extends itself to all: and though other animals have a lower station assigned to them than man has; yet every kind of sensible beings, in what condition soever they are placed, feel as much of the care and goodness of God as is sufficient to make that condition happy. If therefore the end, which he works for, is the measure, by which he expects we should regulate our conduct; we must find out differ-
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ent sorts of food, of clothing, and of diversions from what are in use at present.

A great stress is here laid upon the incapacity, which brutes are under, of being obliged to observe any other law but what instinct guides them to or present appetite recommends; nature has not enabled them to perceive that it is their duty to do us good and to avoid doing us harm. This defect in their frame and constitution is thought sufficient to cancel all obligations on our part; whilst their power and supposed inclination to hurt us produce a state of war between us and them, and give us a right to use them in what manner we please.—But what animals are they, which have such a power and shew, when unprovoked, such a disposition to hurt us, as makes it necessary to take away their lives in our own defence? The fish cannot live in the same element with us: animals of the domestic sort appear ready to contract a familiarity with mankind: the ox, the sheep, and the deer are harmless, when we leave them to their own enjoyments; they would rather retire to some distance from us, than come near enough to do us any mischeif. Certainly we may lawfully defend ourselves against those, which attack us; but this is no more a reason why we should declare war against brutes of all sorts, or why we should kill and eat those, which never disturb us; than the lawfulness of killing a man in

in the same circumstances is a reason that will discharge us from all the obligations of virtue towards the rest of our species.

If nothing can support a claim to our friendship and society, but a capacity of returning favours in obedience to the same law that is observed in bestowing them; if we are under no obligations to do good and to avoid doing harm, except in respect of beings that are obliged in their turn to use us in the same manner; then infants, which are not yet arrived at the use of reason, and ideots, which by some natural defect are prevented from ever arriving at it, have as little claim to our virtue as brutes have to a tender and kind behaviour, that is of the same sort as virtue, though it has not been called by the same name. One would think indeed that some of the most civilized nations, the Greeks and Romans, had reasoned in this manner: for we find that they ordered their children to be exposed, without any sort of scruple or any notion of it's being criminal. The mother's tenderness sometimes prevented the execution of such a sentence: but the father's wisdom could not shew him that the sentence was wrong; unless he had known that men may owe a duty to creatures under a natural incapacity of being parties in an obligation.

What then puts such a difference between brutes and men, as obliges us to be virtuous towards our own kind, but allows us to do any harm that we please

please to the animals below us, when our pleasure or advantage make it necessary? It is not that God, in the creation of things and in the appointment of His laws, has worked for the good of man; for we find that He has worked alike for the good of all. It is not that we are naturally in a state of war with brutes; for many of them, and those especially which suffer most by us, are tame and harmless. Or if we say that God does not require us to do good, except to creatures capable of obligation, where we may expect, upon steady and constant principles, a return of the like behaviour; this will give us authority over brutes indeed, but will entirely discharge us from the practice of virtue towards infants and ideots, and will take away the support of this practice, wherever virtue would make us miserable at present or vice make us happy; unless we have recourse to the hopes of a life after this.

But if the happiness of another life must be taken into the account to clear up these difficulties; then the whole matter is at last brought to this issue. —— God has contrived for the benefit of brutes and works for their good; but we do not apprehend that He requires we should do so too, because all the advantage, which we can have from them, is by applying them to our several purposes, by making slaves of them, or by killing them; and we have no notices of any future punishment to

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be inflicted for this treatment, or of any future reward, that would be conferred upon us for our kinder usage of them. In the mean time we are persuaded that God requires us to work, as he has done, for the benefit of man; because we commonly find our account in this behaviour, whilst we are here, and expect that he will take care to make us finally happy for it hereafter.

Thus the only method of shewing why brutes may be treated in a different manner from men will bring us to the very conclusion, that I wanted to establish. —— We do not use to determine what God requires of us by knowing what He does Himself; but by knowing what He will make us happy for. In particular, when virtue is distressed in this world and vice is fortunate, we cannot be assured that he expects we should be virtuous, till we have some notices of a world to come, in which the good are to be rewarded and the bad to be punished.

Nature directs us to pursue happiness; this is the first voice of God instructing us what we are to do. Or if we wait for His farther instructions in the advice of reason; we find that this superiour and governing faculty encourages us in the same pursuit and offers it's best endeavours to assist us in carrying it on. These are our earliest notices of God's will; they are principles interwoven in our constitution, and seem to be a mea-
sure

ſure given us by God himſelf to direct us in determining what His will is in other inſtances. All the parts of the natural world, as far as we are acquainted with them, appear to have been purpoſely contrived for bringing about the general good: and yet, when, by going on in their ſtated and regular courſes, they fail of accompliſhing this purpoſe or even produce ſome partial evil, we do not imagine that God expected them to counteract their proper ends and manner of working. Heavy bodies contribute to the common advantage by their deſcent; plants by the laws of vegetation; and brutes by their ſeveral powers and inſtincts. And when men are conſidered as parts either of the natural or of the moral world, they cannot be expected to anſwer this purpoſe in a conſtant and regular manner any otherwiſe than by purſuing their proper end, that is, by endeavouring to make themſelves happy. The will of God declared to us at firſt by our nature and conſtitution, and ſuggeſted to us again by the voice of reaſon, cannot differ from that will by which he governs the world: and as the former directs us to purſue happineſs, the latter cannot be ſuppoſed to direct us to purſue virtue, till we know whether it will make us happy or miſerable: for before we can tell what courſe he would have us follow, it is neceſſary we ſhould be ſatisfied that it leads to the end, which he has taught

us constantly to endeavour after. So that instead of saying —— God requires us to be virtuous; therefore he will make us happy for it; —— we should reason the other way, and should have some grounds for believing that he designs to make us happy for our virtue hereafter, before we can determine that he requires us to practice it, when it makes us miserable at present.

Whether we can knowingly chuse misery or designedly neglect our true happiness, is a question of more curiosity than use. It is certain that the order of the moral world is in danger of being changed into confusion, if man through any capricious humour should desert his proper end; just as the harmony of the natural world would be destroyed, if the heavens and elements were to desert theirs. And any command of God to neglect our true and natural pursuit, instead of engaging us to carry on the purposes of a common happiness with more steadiness and constancy, would set us loose from all restraint, and would leave us at liberty to be either good and virtuous or profligate and abandoned. All motives become weak and uncertain as soon as our own happiness is out of the question: our constitution is such, and God has made it such, that without this view we are incapable of being obliged to any thing: even His authority will have little weight where our compliance with it does not forward the pur-

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suit of our ultimate end; for the cause of our obligation to practise virtue is not so much His will to have us practice it, as His will to make us happy for it.

The love of God cannot be the original cause of duty, because it is itself a duty; we may always go a step beyond it in our enquiries, and may ask; why we are to love him? The answer that would be given to this question, when compared with what we should say to a man, who asks why he must pursue happiness, will shew that the love of God, though it is a principle of action, cannot be looked upon as a first principle. Tell the vicious that they hurt their constitution, that they squander away their fortune and forfeit the affections of mankind; or, if they prefer the fancied pleasures of excess and debauchery to those real advantages, tell them that their present way of life will certainly make them miserable in a world to come, and that by a contrary behaviour they might secure eternal happiness: should they own themselves to be convinced of all this, and yet ask you afterwards, what happiness is to them; would not you perceive immediately that little good was to be done? All you can say to a man, who asks such a question as this, must be, that the desire of happiness is natural, that it is a part of his constitution, and therefore let him try ever so much to root out his fondness for it, he will con-

continue to court it in some shape or other; and this in effect is giving him no answer at all; it is no better than saying, in other words, that he must desire it, because he must, or because he cannot help it.

Suppose we should attempt to reclaim the vicious by telling them, that if they loved God, they would behave otherwise; were they to own the truth of this, and then to enquire farther, why they ought to love him? to reply that it is constitutional, that it makes a part of their nature, and that they cannot avoid loving him, is not true. For since there are many, who feel no such affection; either nature has not implanted it in all of us, and then it will be a principle of duty to some only, and will leave others at liberty to behave as they please; or else it is such a part of our constitution as we can alter at pleasure, we can weaken it by disuse and wear it out by forgetfulness. See pag. 115. 116. 117. And thus what has been observ'd already concerning the love of virtue may be applied to the love of God: if nature has implanted this affection in us it may be effaced; and what should hinder us from getting rid of it as soon as we can? if any reason can be given for keeping it, we cannot call it a first principle; but if none can be given, it is a very precarious one.

They, who had rather confess that the love of God is not the original cause of duty than suffer

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it to be thought inconstant in itself and uncertain in it's influence, give us some reasons why we should endeavour to raise this affection in our hearts and cherish it as much as we can. We ought to love God, because He expects it from us, and because the excellencies of His nature render Him the most proper object of our affection. But sure we are not obliged to love all those, who expect it from us, to such a degree as to make this affection the ruling principle of our lives. Is not it possible for what they require to be unnatural or unreasonable? and if it should be so; are we under any obligation to comply with their demands, only because they expect it from us? The answer will certainly be, that God cannot require any thing, which contradicts either nature or reason. I own the justness of this answer, and plainly see one of it's consequences: for what might be an objection to our loving other beings, of what sort soever, to the utmost extent of their expectation and upon no better ground than because they expect it, will be no objection at all to our loving God to this degree and upon this reason only. But there is another consequence, which I must desire the reader to take notice of: for if God cannot expect a love from us that is contrary either to nature or to reason, then He cannot require us upon this principle to throw up the pursuit of happiness, because this would be contrary to both.

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Though it is undeniable that the excellency of the Divine nature challenges our warmest affection; yet we may ask, which perfection in that highest and most excellent nature is the immediate object of our love? Do not we love God for His goodness particularly, or because He is the author of our happiness? His wisdom, His power, and His justice we admire and reverence. An affection, which is raised in this manner, can never engage us to practise virtue, when it will make us finally miserable, or when we have no assurance that it will make us finally happy. For the Parent of good can no more require or be pleased with the misery of one man than with that of another: and whoever can think of neglecting his own welfare for God's sake or because God is good, may as well think of neglecting the welfare of others for the same reason. The love of God, when it is carryed beyond the cause which produced it, and beyond the only rational cause which can support it, becomes uncertain in it's influence, and is as likely to root out humanity as to extinguish the desire of happiness, to make us enemies to our species as enemies to ourselves. For such a fantastical and unguided affection will take a different turn according to the temper that it meets with. It teaches the tender and generous to be prodigal of their fortunes, to be fond of indiscretions under the name

name of charity, and to be chearful, whilſt, without doing any real ſervice to mankind, they are ruining themſelves and ſtarving their families. An uneaſy and melancholy turn of mind ſoon changes a groundleſs love into as groundleſs a fear; and out of what might, under the conduct of reaſon and God's word, have been made the comfort and joy of a man's life and the foundation of ſure hope in his death, it produces the needleſs but dreadful apprehenſions of God's diſpleaſure, and the conſtant torments of ſuch a gloomy ſuperſtition as makes him live in wretchedneſs and die in deſpair. The ſame capricious affection, inſtead of ſoftening the obdurate breaſt, occaſions in it another ſort of ſuperſtition, leſs troubleſome, it may be, to ourſelves than the former would have been, but more fatal to others; a ſuperſtition full of cruelty and fierceneſs which puts men upon butchering their ſpecies for the love of God, and perſuades them that, whilſt they are defacing His image by the murder of His creatures, they are doing Him the moſt acceptable ſervice.

Thus we find at laſt that the love of God cannot be ſuppoſed to oblige us to do any thing in oppoſition to our true and real intereſt, and that it cannot be made a principle of virtue at all, unleſs it ariſes from His kindneſs towards us and His diſpoſition to make us happy. But if we love God only on account of His regard for our happineſs;

this affection will never lead us to the practice of virtue, till we are assured that virtue will promote, or at least will not interrupt our final good.

Here we shall begin to want some better directions than the reasoning moralists can supply us with.—Ask them why virtue is our duty, though it fails of making us happy in this life, or even exposes us to hardships and misery; and since they can find no affection in the nature of man, which endears this practice to us, nor any fitness in the nature of virtue, which makes it always eligible; since it cannot be known either that the authority of God enjoyns, or that the love of God recommends any sort of behaviour, till it appears to be connected with our final good; in order to shew that virtue is in these circumstances a natural or a reasonable practice, they must give us some assurance of a heaven and future recompence for it.—Ask them again what grounds they have to expect that God will reward our virtue in a world to come; and they set out as if they had proved already, that whatever hardships and misery it may expose us to, whilst we are in this world, yet the obligations to adhere to it are constant and invariable. Why else do we hear of an unequal distribution of things, of suffering virtue and of prosperous vice? Is the justice of God at all concerned to make men happy for what he did not require of them? can they be entitled to any future

future recompence for having made themselves miserable by their adherence to virtue, if it was matter of their own free choice and what they might have let alone; if nature did not persuade it, nor reason dictate it, nor God command it?— Teach me that my Creator will hereafter put me in possession of my final good, upon condition I behave, whilst I am here, so as to please Him; and then from the nature of things I can satisfy myself that virtue is my duty: I will conclude that such behaviour, as by the constitution of the present world he has favoured with the greatest share of temporal happiness, is the same that he designs to make me everlastingly happy for in a world to come. Or teach me that God, who is the kind and good Author of my being, requires me to be virtuous in every circumstance and condition of life; and then I shall plainly see it to be my duty: and shall readily submit to whatever evil it brings upon me at present, not doubting but He, who expects it from me, will take care to make me happy for it. But instead of receiving any distinct account of these important points, we are only amused with words and led round in the same circle: when we want to know what ground we have for believing that our final good depends upon such behaviour as makes us miserable in this life, we are told that God expects us to be virtuous; and therefore, because He is just

and good, there must be another life, in which we shall be happy for it. When we want to know farther, how our guides will make out that He requires us to practice virtue though attended with misery; they will find themselves at a loss for a satisfactory answer, unless they call in the hopes of a future reward. Thus the obligations of virtue are made out by presupposing the truth of what can never be proved, till those obligations are established: and the hopes of obtaining a reward for our virtue are made to depend upon what we have little reason to believe, till such a reward is ascertained.

God, we are told, sent us into the world to be happy: and yet there are some, who, without any fault or imprudence of their own, never obtain what their Creator designed for them; who, by the malice of other men or by misfortune and natural calamities, are unavoidably miserable. This point is much enlarged upon by the author of *the religion of nature delineated*, and is urged by him in all it's strength to prove that the soul of man subsists after the dissolution of his body. He cannot persuade himself that a just and good Being, such as God is, will suffer those poor creatures, whose griefs and pangs have much outweighed their enjoyments, to be losers by their existence; as they must be, if there was no future state, where the proper amends may be made them.

Wollaston sect. IX. prop. 8

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This learned and thinking writer seems however to have been aware, that the expectations of another life, when they are raised in this manner, will rather administer comfort under afflictions, than be of use in supporting an uniformly virtuous behaviour. The heathens might, he thinks, by reasoning upon their own observations be assured of a life after this: but it is under a declared sense of wanting a guide and with great appearance of distrust, that he goes on to inform his readers what general thoughts he imagines the self-taught philosophers might have about a future recompence for their virtue.

There was great reason why he should proceed with all this modest caution; because an amends to be made us for the misery which we have suffered, is a very different thing from a reward to be given us for the good which we have done. We may have hopes that our Creator will make us amends for the unavoidable misery, which we feel ourselves, if we only know that he sent us into the world to be happy: but before we can conclude that this amends will depend upon the happiness, which we have communicated to others, we must know that he sent us into the world to be virtuous: and when a man finds himself under the necessity of bearing afflictions, which his vices have not brought upon him, and which his vir-

virtues cannot relieve; he can have no assurance that God expects he should be virtuous, till he is assured of the very point in question, till he sees plainly that the happiness of a life to come will be the reward of his virtue, or that his final condition will be determined according to his behaviour, whilst he is here.

By enquiring into the nature of the human soul I may find abundant reason for believing it to be naturally immortal; there may appear nothing in the frame and constitution of it, which can prevent its continuance for endless ages. But what am I to conclude from hence?—The same God, who created, is able to destroy: and unless it appears that he has business for me to do, that he has a punishment to inflict or a reward to bestow upon me in a life after this: I cannot be assured that he will not interpose and put an end to my being, as soon as I have answered all the purposes and have received all the happiness, for which he designed me. Or what if I knew that the human soul, because it cannot perish naturally, will not perish at all? does it immediately follow that my virtue will be rewarded and my vice be punished, only because I am immortal? Had God at any time revealed to the virtuous, or had He given them principles from whence it might be proved, that they should live ten years longer;

Essay on Man Ep. III. lin. 73. 74.

might

might they conclude, that within the compass of these ten years they are to receive a compensation for their former behaviour? Why then is their reward more certain, if they are to continue for ever in another state, than if they were only to continue for a determinate time in this? why must the happiness of another world be dispensed in such a manner that the recompence, which by continuing in this life they were in no likelihood of obtaining, should immediately be ensured to them upon the first notices of a life to come? When they know indeed that God designs they should pass out of this world into another; they may rest satisfied that His goodness will attend them thither, and that all His creatures, wherever they are, will be taken proper care of. But the question is, whether their present behaviour will engage Him to place them hereafter in a better condition than they are in now? and if this question is examined by the glimmering light of our own reason, we have already seen how unable we are to come to any conclusion about it.

Upon the whole therefore, since it is necessary for us to be informed, that the attainment of our final happiness depends upon our present behaviour, before a constant and universal practice of virtue will appear to be agreeable to nature and reason; and since natural religion leaves us here in

in great and inexplicable doubts; we must look for the true cause of moral obligation in the revealed will of God; and to prove that a constant and universal practice of virtue is our duty, it will be necessary to shew that He has expresly promised to reward in another life those who diligently seek Him in this.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The revelations, that were made to mankind before the law of Moses, enforced their obedience to the will of God by the promises of happiness in a life after this.

WE will consider revelation as divided into three periods: the first of them is that before the law of Moses was given; the second that whilst the law subsisted; and the third that of Christianity after the law was abrogated.

In explaining the instructions which God in these several periods has given to mankind, in relation either to his own will or to their happiness, I shall take it for granted that the life, which was lost by eating the fruit of the [a] tree of

[a] It has been frequently asked why the tree, which our first parents were forbidden to eat of, should be called the tree of *knowledge*. It does not appear to have been called so, because the fruit would make those, who eat of it more knowing; since it is impossible that the knowledge of good and evil, whatever it was, from whence the tree had its name, should relate to any change, which by eating the fruit of it would be made either in the intellectual faculties, or in the condition and circumstances of our first parents. For any such change must have been either for the better or for the worse: and if this knowledge of good and evil could not possibly be any thing, which would better their condition, and so was worth obtaining, nor any thing, which would make their condition worse, and so was to be avoided; we may conclude that it did not mean any effect, that the forbidden fruit would have upon their circumstances, their nature, or their understanding.

When

Locke's reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity p. 1.

knowledge of good and evil, was eternal life. Or, becauſe I am now writing to Chriſtians, who

When God called it the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he did not intend by that name to repreſent the fruit of it as any thing deſireable, and ſuch as would alter their condition for the better; becauſe this would have been impoſing upon them; it would have been tempting them to diſobey his commands by a falſe ſuggeſtion: for the event ſufficiently ſhews that the eating this fruit, inſtead of improving their nature, was attended with moſt deplorable conſequences. One of theſe conſequences the Deity had given them notice of; he aſſured them, at the ſame time that he forbad them to eat the fruit, that by their diſobedience they would immediately forfeit their right to immortality; *in the day thou eateſt of it thou ſhalt ſurely die:* for thus ſome very judicious commentators underſtand this threatening; and thus it was underſtood by Symmachus, who tranſlates the original words מות תמות θνητὸς ἔσῃ. But beſides this bad conſequence of their diſobedience, we find that they became ſenſible of wants and infirmities, that the ground was curſed for their ſakes, and that they were driven out from paradiſe, and were condemned to labour and ſorrow. And can we believe, that he who had plainly informed them of one misfortune, which would certainly follow their eating the fruit, would conceal the reſt; and call the fruit by ſuch a name as would give them reaſon to believe, that, though their diſobedience would make their condition worſe in one reſpect, by depriving them of their right to immortality; yet it would make it better in another reſpect, by improving their underſtanding and giving them knowledge, which they had not before?

But here it may be asked in return, whether God had not made the tree good for food and pleaſant to the ſight? and if by theſe advantages he could tempt them to eat, why might not he tempt them by another? might not he, who made the tree deſireable from the apparent uſe and pleaſantneſs of its fruit, be as well ſuppoſed to have made it deſireable upon account of its producing in thoſe, who ſhould eat it, the knowledge of good and evil? They, who urge this, do not ſtate the queſtion truly: it is not, — whether God might not, if he had pleaſed, have given the fruit of this tree many advantagious qualities, and amongſt the reſt that of improving the underſtanding: but — whether he could repreſent it as having ad-

look upon both the old and new testaments to have been of divine original, I may use the au-

advantageous qualities, which it had not; whether he could call it the tree of knowledge, if this name signified a quality in the fruit of it, which would alter their condition for the better; when he knew that it had no such qualities, and that by eating of it their condition would be altered infinitely for the worse. And though we should grant that the tree's being good for food and pleasant to the sight was a temptation to eat of it; yet this is no reason for believing that their good and gracious Creator, the God of truth, might suggest to them hopes of obtaining advantages by eating of it, when he knew that death and misery would be the unavoidable consequence. Thus the event sufficiently proves that the tree was not called the tree of knowledge of good and evil from any quality, which the fruit of it had, whereby they who eat it would have their circumstances or their understanding improved: and as it had no such quality, we cannot possibly believe that God would give it such a name as would make our first parents believe that it had; nor that he, *who tempteth no man*, would tempt them to disobey his command with the false expectation of being made wiser and happier.

But neither could it be called the tree of knowledge of good and evil to mark out any quality in the fruit of it, by which their condition, who eat of it, would be made worse. Our first parents did indeed upon eating it find an alteration in their circumstances much for the worse: they then knew natural evil, that is, were sensible of wants and infirmities, which they felt not before: but neither this alteration nor the sense of these infirmities can be the knowledge of good and evil from whence the tree had its name. For if this knowledge had meant any thing, which was bad for them, the serpent was very far from coming up to the character of a subtil tempter, when, according to the common interpretation of the words, he advised our first parents to eat of the fruit, *because it would make them like gods knowing good and evil*. Had this knowing good and evil meant a change for the worse; instead of bringing it into sight and making it a reason why they should eat, he would at least have dissembled it; or most likely would have denied this bad consequence of their eating as he did the other: for when Eve told him, that, if they eat of that tree, they should die; he does not

thority of one to interpret the other by : and St. Paul expresly declares that the penalty, which

grant this to be the case, much less does he affirm that what they were so much afraid of, was a reason why they should eat: he denies the fact, says that God had imposed upon them, and assures them that, notwithstanding this menace, even God himself knew well enough that they should not die. Strange! that he, who thus guarded against their apprehensions of one ill consequence, can be supposed to bring the other full into their view and even to urge it as a motive for disobeying the command of God. And sure it is impossible for any one, who has read the bible in the common translations, to think that the knowledge of good and evil means any thing, which was bad for those, who had it; since he will there find the tempter representing this knowledge as the state of gods and the Lord himself giving the same account of it; *the man is become as one of us to know good and evil.*

Upon the whole therefore; as the knowledge of good and evil could not be a change in the circumstances or in the intellectual faculties of those, who should eat the fruit of the tree called by that name, either for the better or for the worse: we may conclude that it was no change at all: and that the knowledge of good and evil did not relate to our first parents so as to mean any thing, which they would either get or lose by eating that fruit.

The words עץ הדעת טוב ורע may be translated *the tree* which is *the test of good and evil*, a tree of discernment of good and evil, by which God would make tryal of them, by which it should be made appear whether they would be good or evil, whether they would own the sovereignty of their Creator, whether they would obey or disobey his commands. The tree was like all others in the garden; God had made them all good for food and pleasant to the eye as well as this; and therefore in what he had done there was no temptation to prefer this to the rest, nor any particular reason for desiring to eat of it; when their eye and their taste might be as well pleased, and their food be as well supplied from any other tree as from this. But as God had commanded them not to touch it, as he had made it the test of their obedience and assured them they should die, if they disobeyed; they had the best reason in the world for not eating of it: and thus we find that, in this sense of the words, God was not the author of their sin and that they were not tempted by

was inflicted on our first parents for transgressing the command of God, was the loss of immorta-

by him, but that *sin came into the world through envy of the devil* and that *they were tempted by being drawn away of their own lusts and enticed*†. This could not have been the case, if God had annexed the acquisition of knowledge to the eating of this tree, and so had made it incomparably more desireable than all the other trees of the garden: and much less could it have been the case, if God had given it a name, which should make them think it more desireable than the rest, when he knew it to be far otherwise, and that no advantages could be obtained from it, but that the greatest misfortune would certainly attend their eating of it.

Three objections may be made to what I have been endeavouring to make out. The first from the serpent's promising them that they should be as gods knowing good and evil. The second from the woman's being engaged to eat, as from other motives, so partly from perceiving that it was a tree to be desired to make one wise. The third from God's saying of them after they had eaten; the man is become as one of us to know good and evil. In all these instances the knowing good and evil is represented as what might be and was acquired by our first parents upon eating the fruit: but then it is represented too as an acquisition, which was worth the making, such an one as would be of advantage to them: and since we are sure this was not the case, since it is impossible to tell what knowledge they received, which they had not before, except the knowledge of their infirmities, a sort of knowledge that would be very far from making them equal to God. I think we may conclude that the objections, whether we can answer them or not, must be grounded upon some misinterpretation of the text.

The words of the serpent are והייתם כאלהים ידעי טוב ורע which we translate, *ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil:* but they might have been translated *ye shall be as gods these discerners of good and evil:* for the word ידעי may as well be refered to כאלהים as to והייתם God had assured them that in the day they eat of the fruit, which he had forbidden them, they should surely die, the tempter endeavours to seduce them by assuring them on the other hand, that God very well knew they should not die for eating it, but that their eyes should be opened, that they should perceive who and what they

1 Cor. xv. 22. lity. For he tells us; *that we shall be all made alive in Christ as we all died in Adam*; that the

they were, and that they should be no longer in subjection to so hard a master, but be equal to gods these discerners of good and evil, who had without any right usurped a dominion over them, and pretended to an authority of making tryal whether they would behave well or ill. This may serve as an answer to the first of these objections.

The words of the historian, which gave occasion to the second objection are, that the woman saw it was נֶחְמָד הָעֵץ לְהַשְׂכִּיל *a tree to be desired to make one wise.* This looks as if she expected some improvement in her knowledge by eating it: and so she might; and yet not expect it because the tree was called עֵץ הַדַּעַת for the serpent had told her, that her eyes should be opened and she be made acquainted with her condition: which was as good a reason for her thinking the fruit would improve her knowledge (if she could rely, as we find she did, upon the serpent's veracity) as any name of the tree could possibly have been. And indeed the original will lead us to conclude, that is must have been something else, and not the name, which led her to these expectations, whatever they were: for if the tree was called עֵץ הַדַּעַת because it would improve their understanding, if it was said that they should by eating be as gods יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע upon account of any accession of knowledge, which they would receive from eating it's fruit; then it is not likely that the historian, had he designed to express the same thing in this place, would change the word יָדַע which he had used all along. Had the woman's thinking it a tree to be desired to make one wise been owing to the name of it, he would have said לְהוֹדִיעַ and not לְהַשְׂכִּיל. Nay, perhaps the word לְהַשְׂכִּיל may not signify in this place *to make them wise*, but *to make them prosper*, that is, to improve their condition: for thus the word שָׂכַל is translated in the text of Deuteron. c. xxix. v. 10. and of Josh. c. i. v. 7. and this the lexicographers tell us is not an unusual sense of it, especially in the hiphil conjugation. And we find that the serpent, not God, had promised her such an improvement; for he had informed her that by eating of it they should be made equal to God, should shake off his authority, and be delivered from the slavery of having him to inspect their actions.

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fe restored to us by our redemption is the same, which was lost by the fall; and that the life,

The third objection is raised from what God says after they had eaten, *the man is become as one of us to know good and evil* כְּאַחַד מִמֶּנּוּ לָדַעַת טוֹב וָרָע and in this rendering of the passage there seems to be an intimation that the fruit had made them equal to God by giving them knowledge of good and evil, which they had not before. But the words might have been rendered; *the man is become as one of us, as to the test of good and evil,* as to the mark of discerning whether he would behave well or ill, whether he would obey or disobey our commands. For thus the same sense is given to the word דַעַת that it had been used in all along: and the particle ל does not signify only *to* but *as to* (quod attinet ad) thus 1. Sam. c. IX. v. 20. וְלָאֲתֹנוֹת הָאֹבְדוֹת *and as for the asses that were lost*: Psalm XVII. v. 4. לִפְעֻלּוֹת אָדָם *concerning the works of men.* But how were they become as gods כְּאַחַד מִמֶּנּוּ not in nature and condition, not in immortality and happiness; for their immortality, which was the gift of God, was so far from being ascertained to them by what they had done, that they were immediately deprived of it, and, instead of having made their condition happier, they found themselves weak and helpless, and were soon after condemned to labour and sorrow. But to be כֵּאלֹהִים is to be so equal to God, as not to own his authority; it is to set themselves upon a level with him: and this they did by throwing off his government, and by refusing submission to his commands. Thus we find the particle כ used for equality in state and dignity Ruth c. II. v. 13 וְאָנֹכִי לֹא אֶהְיֶה כְּאַחַת שִׁפְחֹתֶךָ *though I be not* like *unto one of thy handmaids*: the LXX translate כ in this passage by the particle ὡς· and ὡς in the language of St. Matthew is used exactly in this sense, οὐκ ἔστι μαθητὴς ὑπὲρ τὸν διδάσκαλον, οὐδὲ δοῦλος ὑπὲρ τὸν κύριον αὐτοῦ· ἀρκετὸν τῷ μαθητῇ ἵνα γένηται ὡς ὁ διδάσκαλος αὐτοῦ, καὶ ὁ δοῦλος ὡς κύριος αὐτοῦ c. X. v. 24. *the disciple is not above his master nor the servant above his lord; it is enough for the disciple that he be* as *his master and the servant* as *his lord.* And thus we may conclude the sense of the words, which were the ground of this third objection, to be; *the man, as to this test of his obedience, has shaken off our authority, has made himself our equal that is, has acted as if he was so, by refusing to submit to our commands.*

which

Rom. vi. v. 23. which our redeemer has procured for us, *the gift which God has given us through Jesus Christ is eternal life.* The same Apostle says in another
Rom. v. v. 12. place that *by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin:* and if these words are not clear enough, we may use those of the Apocryphal
Wisdom ii. v. 23. 24. Solomon as a comment upon them; *God created man to be immortal and made him to be an image of his own eternity; nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world, and they, that do hold on his side do find it.*

But man by the fall did not only forfeit his title to immortality; he lost possession too of his true happiness, and was condemned to labour and sorrow, to pain and infirmity; he was to continue in being only for a little time, and was not to be happy, whilst he did continue. The fatal sentence
Gen. iii. v. 17. passed upon him was; *cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.* There were doubtless many other misfortunes, which attended the fall, and which Adam entailed upon his posterity; but these are all that come within the compass of my design: for this part of the curse removed all true happiness,

ness, the ultimate end, which reason and nature teach us to pursue, far out of sight, and left us uncertain what it is, and where we are to look for it; and by this the practice of virtue became precarious, and was made to depend upon confined and unsteady motives.

If virtue was, from the very nature of it, from it's own beauty and excellence, the ultimate end of man, the only pursuit worth engaging in, and what reason teaches us to make every thing else subservient to; then virtue itself suffered no damage by the fall, and man suffered but little. For though we became mortal and unhappy, yet virtue still retained the same charms that it had before; and we lost nothing, that was of any consequence: since, as long as it is in our power to be virtuous, we are in possession of whatever upon these principles is at all desireable. So inconsistent is this scheme of morality with the Mosaic history of man's origin and fall; so vain, if it was true, would be the penalty inflicted upon man for his disobedience! The haughty Stoic would have smiled at the empty threats of his Creator, and would in his own heart have triumphed at the thoughts of losing nothing, which he cared for. What is it to him, that his life is to be full of pain and sorrow, [b] who does not desire any thing but

[a] Atque si in virtute satis est praesidii ad bene vivendum, satis est etiam ad beate. Satis est enim certe in virtute, ut fortiter vivamus:

virtue? what is it to him, that he is to become mortal, [c] to whom there is no difference between a day of virtue and an éternity of it? — But it is in vain to urge the Mosaic history of the fall and it's consequences against this independent principle of virtue: the antient Stoics were unacquainted with that history, and the modern ones are not very ready to submit to it's authority.

Others however there are, who have studied human nature, and have observed upon it enough to see, that to be happy is the end, which reason and nature teach us to pursue, and that virtue is not sufficient of itself to obtain this end. They understand too, that in the scripture account, which, as they themselves are ready to maintain, had God for it's author, man is represented as having lost some considerable advantages, that his Creator had originally put him in possession of. But then they are pleased with the magnificent language of the Stoical school and would be glad to reconcile the system of morality, which is taught there, with the Christian doctrines. To do this, they maintain that the fitness of the thing itself, the

si fortiter, etiam ut magno animo, et quidem ut nulla re unquam terreamur, semperque simus invicti: sequitur, ut nihil poeniteat, nihil desit, nihil obstet: ergo omnia profluenter, absolute, prospere. Cic. Tusc. dis. 5. 18.

[c] *Λέγουσιν οἱ Στωικοὶ ὅτι ἀγαθὸν ὁ χρόνος οὐκ αὔξει προσγινόμενος, ἀλλὰ κἂν ἀκαρές τις ὥρας γένηται φρόνιμος, οὐδενὶ πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν ἀπολειφθήσεται τοῦ τὸν αἰῶνα χρωμένου τῇ ἀρετῇ καὶ μακαρίως ἐν αὐτῇ καταβιοῦντος.* Plut. adverf. Stoic. 1061. F.

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rectitude of virtue and it's intrinsic excellence are the proper and natural causes, which oblige to the practice of it: but man, they say, is now in a depraved and corrupted state, and may be virtuous without being happy: therefore since as a sensible creature natural good is his end, but virtue as he is a rational one; it is, in his present circumstances, become necessary to call in the aid of promises of happiness to support him in the practice of what is right: for otherwise sense, which in his former condition was always satisfied and had nothing to care for, might, now he is fallen from thence, and has wants which he felt not before, be too strong for his reason; adversity and great misery, if there was no future recompence, might make him deaf to the dictates of his own mind.— But, as far as we can depend upon the scripture history of man, happiness was as much an end of action, and an ultimate end too, in the state of innocence as it is now, only then he was in possession and now he is in pursuit of it. And is happiness less desireable, when we have it, than when we have it not? is it less a motive to virtue, when without virtue we cannot keep it, than it is, when without virtue we cannot obtain it? There is indeed this difference between the condition of man before and since the fall; that he was then sure of being happy, as long as he continued obedient to God; but now he finds, that he may be miserable for

the present, even whilst he is engaged in doing what God requires. But, notwithstanding this difference, happiness was then as much a positive sanction as it is now: God then promised that, if he was obedient, he should continue happy and immortal; and now He promises, upon the same conditions, to make him so hereafter. In the state of innocence these sanctions took place immediately; in the present circumstances of mankind the execution of them is suspended.

It is not therefore any thing peculiar to man since the fall, which has made it necessary to promise, that the virtuous shall be happy. For we find this promise was by God himself thought necessary to be made before, and was as much the support of virtue, nay more so, in paradise than it is amidst all the ill consequences of being driven out from thence: because happiness, that we enjoy, will be more effectual in making us fond of that virtue, which secures the enjoyment of it, than any, that is at a distance and is to be hoped for only in a life after this: and those threatnings of misery, which are to be executed immediately upon the vicious, will operate more strongly to discourage us from the practice of what is forbidden, than those can do, which are far removed, and will not hurt us till after death.

It may here be objected, that man was to lose the happiness, that he was possessed of before the fall,

fall, not by forsaking virtue, but by disobeying a positive command of God; and that, if he had been obedient to this command, virtue would have wanted no foreign sanctions to support it: for as long as man continued in his original innocence, virtue was self-eligible and self-sufficient, and to be virtuous was to be happy.——But had virtue been the happiness of man before the fall, would not it have been so still? or has the nature of man been so altered, that, what was agreeable to it, whilst he continued obedient to God's command, has ceased to be so since his transgression? To say that man's happiness still consists in virtue, has been shewn to be contrary to the See pag. 217. experience and general consent of mankind: and to say that it once consisted in it, though it does not now, will be of little service to the cause of those moralists, who would have disinterested principles be thought the only proper ones to practise virtue upon. for this is the same as endeavouring to persuade us that we ought to pursue virtue for it's own sake in our present condition, now it is not happiness; because in the state of innocence, when it was happiness, there was no occasion for any rewards to recommend it.

But what if man lost his happiness, not by parting with his virtue, but by transgressing a positive command? is this any reason for concluding that, before the fall, to be happy and to be virtuous were the

the ſame thing? it ſeems rather to prove the direct contrary; ſince, if his happineſs, before he diſobeyed that command, conſiſted in being virtuous; as diſobeying that command would have left him in poſſeſſion of his virtue, it is impoſſible it ſhould have deprived him of his happineſs. Or if nothing but his obedience kept the virtuous man happy, if by eating the forbidden fruit he would become, notwithſtanding his virtue, ſubject to miſery, and be in many caſes ſo much expoſed to ſorrows and afflictions, as not to ſee any reaſon for perſevering in it; then virtue was no more eligible in its own nature before the fall than it is at preſent: it was no more ſufficient to ſupport itſelf without foreign ſanctions, when it could not free it's votaries from calamity without the aſſiſtance of God, which he promiſed them upon the eaſy condition of not taſting the forbidden fruit. than it is now it cannot make them happy without the ſame aſſiſtance, which ſince the fall he has promiſed to give us upon other conditions.

The inſtructions, which God has given to mankind and the promiſes, which he has made them, have in every period of revelation been ſuch as the conſequences of the fall had made neceſſary. He has taught us where to look for our happineſs, and has encouraged us to be virtuous upon ſuch motives as are ſteady and conſtant in every circumſtance and condition of life, and upon ſuch

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as will extend our virtue alike to every part of our species. We were left, by the sentence passed upon us, to provide for ourselves, as well as we could, by our own care and diligence, whilst we should continue here; and were, as far as appeared, to hope for nothing farther after death. The constitution of things did indeed continue such as would make the practice of virtue a likely means to secure the little portion of happiness, that is to be obtained in this world: but, that God would make amends in another life to those, who suffered for it in this, or that they, who neglected to observe it, would suffer any thing besides the present inconveniencies, to which vice exposes us, did not sufficiently appear. And thus in many instances the reasons for being virtuous would have failed; if God had not restored the hopes of immortality, and with them the expectations of being made happy ourselves in a world to come, for our endeavours to make others so in this.

Some hopes of this sort were suggested immediately after the fall, and our first parents had the comfort of hearing the curse, which attended their disobedience, in part removed even before it was denounced. The serpent was the first condemned; and in his sentence they had hopes given them of recovering one day what they had lost then. *The Lord God said unto the serpent, because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all* Gen. III. v. 14.

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cattle and above every beast of the field, upon thy belly shalt thou go and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel. I shall give the reader an account of this whole transaction and explain the sense of this promise in the words of a very judicious and truly learned writer. "Our first parents were now "in a state of sin standing before God to receive "sentence for their disobedience and had reason "to expect a full execution of the penalty threat-"ned, *in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt "surely die:* but God came in mercy as well as "judgment, purposing not only to punish, but "to restore man: the judgment is awful and se-"vere; the woman is doomed to sorrow in con-"ception, the man to sorrow and travel all the "days of his life; the ground is cursed for his "sake; and the end of the judgment is, *dust thou "art and to dust shalt thou return:* had they "been left thus, they might have continued in "their labour and sorrow for their appointed time, "and at last have returned to dust without any "well-grounded hope or confidence in God: they "must have looked upon themselves as rejected "by their Maker, delivered up to trouble and "sorrow in this world, and as having no hope in "any other. Upon this foot, I conceive there "could

Sherlock's use and intent of prophecy. p. 68.

" could have been no religion in the world; for
" a sense of religion without hope is a state of
" phrenzy and distraction, void of all induce-
" ments to love and obedience, or any thing else,
" that is praise-worthy. If therefore God intend-
" ed to preserve them as objects of mercy, it was
" absolutely necessary to communicate so much
" hope to them as might be a rational foundation
" for their future endeavours to reconcile them-
" selves to him by a better obedience. This seems
" to be the meaning of the first divine prophecy,
" *I will put enmity between thee and the woman,* Gen. c. III.
" *and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise* v. 15.
" *thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;* and
" this was absolutely necessary to the state of the
" world, and the condition of religion, which
" could not possibly have been supported with-
" out the communication of such hopes. The
" prophecy is excellently adapted to this purpose,
" and manifestly conveyed such hopes to our first
" parents. For let us consider in what sense we may
" suppose them to understand this prophecy. Now
" they must necessarily understand the prophecy
" either according to the literal meaning of the
" words; or according to such meaning as the
" whole circumstance of the transaction, of which
" they are a part, does require. If we suppose them
" to understand the words literally, and that God
" meant them so to be understood, this passage

" must appear absolutely ridiculous. Do but imagine that you see God coming to judge the offenders; Adam and Eve before him in the utmost distress; that you hear God inflicting pains and sorrows and misery and death upon the first of human race; and that in the midst of all this scene of woe and great calamity, you hear God foretelling with great solemnity a very trivial accident, that should sometimes happen in the world: that serpents would be apt to bite men by the heels, and that men would be apt to revenge themselves by striking them on the head. In the name of God what has this trifle to do with the loss of mankind, with the corruption of the natural and moral world, and the ruin of all the glory and happiness of the creation? great comfort it was to Adam, doubtless, after telling him that his days should be short and full of misery, and his end without hope, to let him know, that he should now and then knock a snake on the head, but not even that, without paying dear for his victory, for the snake should often bite him by the heel. Adam, surely, could not understand the prophecy in this sense, though some of his sons have so understood it; a plain indication how much more some men are concerned to maintain a literal interpretation of Scripture, than they are to make it speak common sense. Leaving this
" there-

“ therefore as abſolutely abſurd and ridiculous,
“ let us conſider what meaning the circumſtances
“ of the tranſaction do neceſſarily fix to the words
“ of this prophecy. Adam tempted by his wife,
“ and ſhe by the ſerpent, had fallen from their
“ obedience, and were now in the preſence of
“ God expecting judgment. They knew full well
“ at this juncture, that their fall was the victory
“ of the ſerpent, whom by experience they found
“ to be an enemy to God and to man; to man,
“ whom he had ruined by ſeducing him to ſin;
“ to God, the nobleſt work of whoſe creation he
“ had defaced. It could not therefore but be ſome
“ comfort to them to hear the ſerpent firſt con-
“ demned, and to ſee that, however he had pre-
“ vailed againſt them, he had gained no victory
“ over their maker; who was able to aſſert his
“ own honour, and to puniſh this great author of
“ iniquity. By this method of God's proceeding
“ they were ſecured from thinking that there was
“ any evil being equal to the creator in power and
“ dominion: an opinion, which gained ground
“ in after-times through the prevalency of evil:
“ and is, where it does prevail, deſtructive of all
“ true religion. The condemnation therefore of
“ the ſerpent was the maintenance of God's ſu-
“ premacy; and that it was ſo underſtood, we
“ have, if I miſtake not, a very ancient teſtimony
“ in the book of Job: *with God is ſtrength and* Job c. xii. v. 16.

" *wisdom, the deceived and the deceiver are his,*
" that is, equally subject to his command. The
" belief of God's supreme dominion, which is the
" foundation of all religion, being thus preserved,
" it was still necessary to give them such hopes
" as might make them capable of religion toward
" God: these hopes they could not but conceive,
" when they heard from the mouth of God, that
" the serpent's victory was not a compleat victory
" even over themselves; that they and their po-
" sterity should be enabled to contest his empire;
" and though they were to suffer much in the
" struggle, yet finally they should prevail, and
" bruise the serpent's head, and deliver themselves
" from his power and dominion over them. What
" now could they conceive this conquest over the
" serpent to mean? is it not natural to expect that
" we shall recover that by victory, which we lost
" by being defeated? they knew that the enemy
" had subdued them by sin, could they then con-
" ceive hopes of victory otherwise than by right-
" eousness? they lost through sin the happiness
" of their creation, could they expect less from
" the return of righteousness than the recovery
" of the blessings forfeited? what else but thi
" could they expect? for the certain knowledge
" they had of their loss when the serpent prevail-
" ed, could not but lead them to a clear know-
" ledge

ledge . . what they ſhould regain by prevailing against the ſerpent.

But if this is the ſenſe in which the prophecy muſt be underſtood, if it gave them reaſon to expect, that in their future victory over the ſerpent they ſhould recover all, that they had loſt in his victory over them; then there was good ground to hope that their immortality would ſome time or other be reſtored to them. If from the ſentence paſſed upon the ſerpent it appeared, that they ſhould be reinſtated in the happineſs, from which they fell; and from the ſentence paſſed upon themſelves, that they were doomed to labour and ſorrow in this life, they muſt conclude that there would be another.

From hence we may obſerve, by the way, that when Moſes in the hiſtory of the fall omits taking notice of the devil, who was the agent in this affair, and always mentions the ſerpent inſtead of him, who was only the inſtrument of that agent; whatever reaſon he might have for this, it could not be owing to any ſpecial deſign of concealing the knowledge of a future ſtate from the Iſraelites, for whoſe more immediate uſe this hiſtory was intended. For if the notice of an evil ſpirit, who oppoſes himſelf to God and endeavours to ſeduce mankind from their obedience to him, was what might have led them to the doctrine of a life to come; then certainly the deſign of keeping this doctrine

Warburton V. 2. p. 449.

doctrine a secret was not the cause of his omission: since, though Moses does not speak of him in the history of the fall, yet he mentions him expressly, and represents him as the patron, if not as the author, of idolatry, in describing the defection of the Israelites from the true God: *but Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness: then he forsook God, which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation: they provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger, they sacrificed unto* [d]devils *not to God.* Perhaps it may be thought that, not the knowledge of such an evil spirit, but of his being the principal agent in the fall, was what Moses apprehended might lead the Israelites to the hopes of a life after this; and therefore, from a design of giving no sort of encouragement to these hopes, he purposely omits to mention that agency, which was so closely connected with the spiritual effects of the fall — the work of redemption — and the doctrine of a future state.—But why should he be so studious to

Deuter. xxxii. v 15. 16. 17.

[d] The word here translated *to devils* is לַשֵּׁדִים which is used in the same sense Ps. cv. v. 35. and is translated by the LXX in both places δαιμονίοις. To one of these passages St. Paul evidently alludes when he tells the Corinthians 1 Ep. c. x. v. 20. ἃ θύει τὰ ἔθνη, δαιμονίοις θύει, καὶ οὐ Θεῷ. So that if δαιμόνιον signifies a spirit at all, it certainly here signifies an evil one, that does harm and opposes itself to God; as the literal meaning of the Hebrew word, and

conceal what was connected with the spiritual effects of the fall, and yet mention the effects themselves; *in the day thou eatest of it thou shalt surely die*; *dust thou art and to dust shalt thou return*? or why should he omit what might bring them accquainted with the work of redemption, and yet point out to them that very work in relating the sentence passed upon the serpent; *the seed of the woman shall bruise thy head*? This is a more direct notice of a future redemption and of God's design to restore to mankind eternal life, than any mention of the devil's agency could have been. And mentioning the loss of immortality, which, if it is not to be called a spiritual effect of the fall, has yet as close a connection with the work of redemption as any effect of it could have, must give them as certain information of that work, when represented to be brought about by the serpent, as if they had known that it was brought about by the devil himself.

In the days of Enos God gave some farther assurances of his design to restore that happiness and immorality to mankind, which had been lost

and the opposition between the worship of that and the worship of God sufficiently shew. That the word δαιμόνιον in the Hellenistical language does signify an evil spirit appears from the apocryphal book of Tobit, where Asmodaeus is constantly called so: for though the book is fabulous, yet the author of a fable would be as likely to use words in their common meaning, as he who writes a true history.

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by the fall. The sacred history informs us, * *that hopes were at that time given to mankind by calling them after the name of the Lord*; for in this sense we may understand the words which our translators have rendered, *then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.* Or if we give them another sense not very unlike the translation in the margin of our English bibles, *then it was begun to call them by the name of the Lord*, then they were first called the sons of God; some good hope, though in this latter rendering not expressed by the historian, would naturally arise in those, to whom this name was given. They, whom God had called his people, could not but hope, that he designed to be reconciled to them; they, whom he adopted for his sons, could not but hope to be restored to the inheritance, which had been lost: they must understand by this title, that they were taken again into his favour; and then it would be impossible for them to think they were still

Gen. IV. v. 26.

* The words אָז הוּחַל לִקְרֹא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה are rendered in the text of our English bibles, *then began men to call upon the name of the Lord*; but in the margin, *then began men to call* themselves *by the name of the Lord.* The learned Dr. Shuckford translates this passage, *then it was begun to call* them *by the name of the Lord*, they were then first called the sons of God, Connect. V. 1. pag. 41. I have followed him as to the meaning of the expression קָרָא בְּשֵׁם though in one of his instances to prove that it signifies *to call after the name* he seems to have mistaken כ for ב Gen. IV. 17. in all the editions of the bible, that I have seen, the word is כְּשֵׁם not בְּשֵׁם but he has produced instances enough without this to make good his construction;

inevitably doomed to suffer the severest punishment, which in his most heavy displeasure he had thought fit to inflict. Calling them his sons was not indeed an express grant of the happiness and immortality, which God at first bestowed upon mankind: but however this title was an earnest, that he actually was, or at least that he was willing to be reconciled to them: and it would be natural for them to believe, that, as their happiness and immortality had been taken away, because God was displeased with them; so his receiving them again into favour was an intimation of his design to make them once more happy and immortal.

The example of Enoch would both confirm the expectations of another life, which had been raised in those whom God was pleased to call after his own name, and would teach them that the way to it was by walking with God, or by obeying his will. Moses relates the fact in these words: *Enoch* Gen. v. v. 24.

tion, and his observation, that Moses himself calls them the sons of God [Gen. c. vi. v. 1.] puts it out of all doubt. The word הוּחַל I translate a little differently from him; it may be hophal of יָחַל as well as of חָלַל and then it will signify *it was made to hope*. See Psalm xxxiii. v. 22. Psalm cxxx. v. 7. The LXX undoubtedly thought that the radical word was יָחַל for they translate it ἤλπισεν· they only read it הוֹחִל instead of הוּחַל which was a very easy mistake in reading without points. The sense of the whole passage in this construction is, *then it was made to hope by calling* them *after the name of the Lord*; at that time hopes were given to mankind by calling them the sons of God.

walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. The account of the son of Sirach is thought to be plainer; *Enoch pleased the Lord and was translated being an example of repentance to all generations.* It is impossible to mistake the meaning of the author to the Hebrews; *by faith*, says he, *Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God; but without faith it is impossible to please him: for he, that cometh to God, must believe, that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them, that diligently seek him.* From comparing these three passages together it appears by what means Enoch pleased God; by repentance and obedience, proceeding upon a persuasion that there is a God, and that He will reward those who endeavour to obey Him. But what could persuade Enoch of this, if mankind had been in the same hopeless condition, which the curse of the fall had left them in? a curse, which he must be well aware of, as he lived more than three hundred years with Adam, who had heard it denounced, who, from having experienced better days, would be highly sensible of the effects of it, and can therefore scarce be supposed to have concealed any part of this affair from his contemporaries. Could he, who knew, that he was to eat bread in the sweat of his face, that his life was to be a life of for-

Ecclus. XLIV, v. 16.

Heb. XI. v. 5.

sorrow, and that he was condemned to return back into the dust from whence he was taken, have any forecaste of a reward for his obedience in this life, or any hopes of being better provided for in another? Here he could expect no happiness, but what his own labour would procure for him; since that only was the small portion, which his offended Creator had left him: nor could he have any grounds for believing that he was to be made happy hereafter; since his immortality, which was at first the conditional gift of God, was upon breach of the conditions forfeited by Adam and by all his posterity. And yet Enoch, notwithstanding he knew this, believed, that God will reward those, who obey him: and this faith was the foundation of his so walking with God as to please him. Had he therefore any superiour privilege of being happier in this life than the rest of his contemporaries were? — This does not appear: nay, from what the author to the Hebrews says, the contrary is evident; for he [f] defines faith to be the evidence of things Heb. XI v. 1.

[f] Mr. Warburton [V. II. pag. 578.] in explaining this 11th chapter to the Hebrews says, that the author having defined what he means by faith proceeds to shew it's nature by it's general efficacy: *but without faith it is impossible to please him* [God] *for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* — If this had immediately followed the definition of faith, there could have been no reason to doubt of it's being designed to shew the nature and general efficacy of it: but between the definition and this passage the efficacy of faith is shewn by the two particular instances of Abel and Enoch; and after it the author goes on

not seen; and therefore Enoch must have trusted in happiness to come, or otherwise it must have been something else, and not faith, which was the foundation of his obedience. Besides, if Enoch had been made to trust in any rewards of virtue to be received in this life, he seems to have been disappointed in his expectations: and this example would have been a very improper one to produce for the encouragement of those, to whom this epistle is directed. It would have been a very weak reason for not casting away their confidence and for running with patience the race, that was set before them, to propose to them an instance of one, whose faith and obedience had been such as pleased God, and who, notwithstanding this, had the singular disadvantage of dying three hundred years younger than any of his contemporaries, that they had heard of. [g] His faith therefore was, that God will in a life to come reward those who diligently seek him in this; which faith we have seen he could not have had, unless he had

on to particulars again. This makes it very unlikely that the design of the passage should be what Mr. Warburton represents. But the true intent of the author will appear from reading the verse before it; where Enoch is affirmed to have been translated by faith, because before his translation he had a testimony given him that he pleased God: and then the author goes on to shew the reason of this conclusion, to prove that his pleasing God was a sure mark of his having faith, *for without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe, that he is and that he is a rewarder of them, that diligently seek him.*

g Mr.

received assurances that God would take off the curse of the fall. The philosophers of the present age may think, that their reason teaches them the impossibility of a virtuous man's being miserable; and that it leads them to conclude, if he is so in this life, that he must be happy in some other. But Enoch could not make this conclusion; unless he would dispute against matter of fact, and trust to his own uncertain reasonings though opposed by the express declarations of God. The sanction annexed to God's prohibition, *in the day thou eatest thou shalt surely die*, and the sentence passed upon our first parents in consequence of their disobedience, *dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*, would have more weight with him, who received the account from the very person, that it was pronounced upon, than all the arguments from an unequal distribution of things either ought to have or could have. We may conclude therefore, that he had some notice of God's gracious intention to remove the sentence, by which mankind had been made subject to misery and death: and, whatever the original of his own See pag. 266, 270.

[r] Mr. Warburton maintains it to be impossible that the author of the epistle to the Hebrews should so forget himself as to affirm in this 11[th] chapter that life and immortality was known and taught under the law in contradiction to many express declarations, which he had made in other places. These declarations shall be examined in their proper place; and in the mean time without affirming what might be the case *under* the law, I cannot help thinking that the account of Enoch in this 11[th] chapter plainly shews mankind to have had hopes of immortality *before* the law.

hope

hope was, he became an example to all generations: from his being translated, that he should not see death, on account of his pleasing God, the rest of mankind, who knew his history, might hope by the same means to be made partakers of immortality too.

The story of Enoch has indeed been said to be told in the book of Genesis in too obscure a manner for any one to gather from thence that he was made immortal. Suppose it to be so; nay, suppose for the present, that this obscurity was affected, with a design to prevent the Israelites from making any discoveries about a future state; yet they, who lived at the same time with Enoch, must know the fact at least as well as the son of Sirach did, and he says, that he was translated. And the author of the epistle to the Hebrews confirms the truth of the son of Sirach's account, and acquaints us that by the word *translated* is meant *that he should not see death*. So that although such as had no other account, but what we meet with in the book of Genesis, might be uncertain what became of Enoch; yet they, who were his contemporaries and were witnesses to what befell him, had evidence enough for expecting a life after this; where they who behave agreeably to the will of God here, shall receive their reward. And if we consider that the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus knew the meaning of Moses, when he says, that

Examin. of Mr. W's. 2d prop. pag. 29.

that Enoch was not, for God took him; perhaps it may not appear neceſſary to grant what was ſuppoſed juſt above, that this ſtory is told with ſuch obſcurity, as if the writer had purpoſely deſigned to hide the truth of the fact. It is ſuch an obſcurity as we perceive might be ſeen through; ſince whether tradition had delivered down the true meaning to him, or he had diſcovered it by his own ſagacity, the ſame tradition, or as good and penetrating a ſagacity would have cleared up this moſt remarkable event long before his time, and would have brought the Iſraelites acquainted with a future ſtate.

After the flood God made a covenant with Abraham, the purport of which will be worth conſidering. The firſt notice that God gave of Gen. XII.
himſelf to this Patriarch was by "calling him from v. 1, 2, 3. XV v. 1.
"his own country and family with a promiſe that XVII. v. 1. 2. 4. 6. 7. 8.
"He would make of him a great nation, would 12 13.
"bleſs him, would make his name great and he "ſhould be a bleſſing; that He would bleſs thoſe, "who ſhould bleſs him and curſe thoſe, who "ſhould curſe him; and that in him all the "families of the earth ſhould be bleſſed. At an- "other time God aſſures him, that He is his ſhield "and his exceeding great reward. And when he "was ninety and nine years old, He appeared to "him again and ſaid to him, I am the almighty "God,

" God, walk before me and be thou perfect: and " I will make my covenant between me and thee, " and will multiply thee exceedingly: and behold " my covenant is with thee and thou shalt be a " father of many nations: I will make thee ex- " ceeding fruitful and will make nations of thee: " and kings shall come out of thee and I will " establish my covenant between me and thee " and thy seed after thee in their generations, for " an everlasting covenant to be a God to thee " and to thy seed after thee: and I will give unto " thee and to thy seed after thee the land wherein " thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan for " an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. " Circumcision was made the sign of this cove- " nant and all the males, that were or should be " in his family, all, that were born in his house, " and all, that were bought with money of the " stranger, which was not of his seed, were com- " manded to be circumcised. This covenant was " renewed with Isaac; and was by him and by " God himself transmitted to Jacob.

Gen. XXVI. v. 3. 4. Gen. XXVII. v. 29. Sherlock on prophecy pag. 132. Gen. XXVIII, v. 14.

The circumstances and the event of the covenant were such as would direct the Patriarchs to refer some part of these promises to a future life. If the promises, which God made to Abraham, had related only to temporal blessings; they must be understood either of the conveniencies and com-

comforts of this life and an advantagious settlement in general; or else of that settlement in particular and those special blessings, which God designed to bestow upon his family in the land of Canaan. Abraham could not but see that, according to the promises of God, he should leave behind him a flourishing and happy posterity: he was to be made exceeding fruitful; nations and kings were to come out of him. But then it was full as obvious, that this was not the whole of what God intended to give him. At the time of making the covenant he had no child but Ishmael; Gen. XVII
and God promised, that he should have a son by his wife Sarah. Abraham's fondness for him that was born already made him unwilling to have the blessings, which his offspring was to enjoy, confined to one, that he could not have the same fondness for, as not being yet born. The faithful Patriarch might indeed be as fully assured, that he should have a son by Sarah, as he was, that he then had one by Hagar; but the tender father could not help being fonder of a child, which had grown up under his care, than of one, which had never yet had any opportunities of gaining upon his affection. *Though he staggered* Rom IV. v. 20
not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith giving glory to God; yet he could not forbear offering up a short and modest petition for his present favourite; *O that Ishmael might*

live before thee! God was pleased to grant his request and to answer, *as for Ishmael I have heard thee; behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly: twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation:* and then farther adds, *but my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee.*

When Abraham saw this distinction made between his sons, when he heard God himself promise as great temporal blessings to Ishmael as he did to Isaac, and yet found at the same time that the blessings of the covenant were limited to the latter; this was enough to inform him, that God, by engaging *to be his God, to be his shield and his exceeding great reward*, and by promising, *that all the families of the earth should be blessed in him*, designed something more than to make the general prosperity of his family in this world so exceeding great, as to give occasion in time to come for those, who would wish the greatest good to such as they loved best, to bless them in this form, *God make thee as Abraham.* There must have been something more than this in the covenant, which was restrained to Isaac; something, that would carry the thoughts of the Patriarch forward into a world to come: for in the greatest favours, which heaven bestows in this life, there was nothing peculiar to the family of Isaac, in which the

the posterity of Ishmael were not made equal to his; except only in the particular grant of the land of Canaan.

But as the blessing of Abraham could not consist in any other temporal happiness, because all other sorts of it would be too general; so neither could it consist in the inheritance of Canaan, because this was too restrained. A promise, which was at the time of making it confined to the descendants of Isaac and Jacob only, could not be satisfied by bestowing upon them the ordinary good things of this life, in which Ishmael and Esau had, by the immediate appointment of God, as large a share as they had. Nor could the promised blessing mean the inheritance of the land of Canaan, for this was of necessity for ever confined to the chosen race; whereas that blessing was in process of time to diffuse itself universally, and to take in all mankind; for in Abraham and in his seed all the families of the earth were to be blessed.

It may not be amiss to consider in what sense the promise of God to Abraham, *in thee*, or as it is in another place, *in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed*, is to be understood: and though the stress of the argument does not depend upon this, yet it will be of some use to prove, that the Apostles explained it of a blessing to be derived from Abraham upon all mankind, because

Sherlock on prophecy, pag. 124.

Gen. XXII. v. 18.

this will make it probable that the Patriarch himself understood it so too. St. Peter tells the Jews, *that they were the children of the prophets and of the covenant, which God made with their fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.* What follows will make it very clear how the Apostle understood this blessing; *unto you first God having raised up his son Jesus sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.* God had promised that all the kindreds of the earth should be blessed in Abraham's seed; and if he entered upon the completion of this promise by sending his son Jesus to bless them first, then blessing all the nations of the earth in the seed of Abraham must mean, that this Jesus the son of Abraham should bless all the nations of the earth in the same manner, as he had begun to bless those, who were the children of that covenant, by which the blessing was promised.

Acts III. v. 25. 26.

But sure St. Peter himself cannot be supposed better acquainted with the true sense of this promise than Abraham was, to whom it was made: if the Apostle saw, that it contained a future blessing to be conveyed by the seed of Abraham to all mankind, the Patriarch must see it too. And, as the family of Isaac was to bear the name of his seed, and not that of Ishmael, it could not but be clear to him, that this universal blessing was the

special

special matter of God's covenant with him; of that part of it however, which was restrained to Isaac, exclusively of his brother Ishmael.—St. Paul informs us what the universal blessing is: it is Gal. III. v. 14. that, which through Jesus Christ is come on the Gentiles: and as this is the blessing of a future life, Abraham had these hopes to encourage his obedience and to support his virtue.

How indeed could the Patriarch reconcile the promises, which God had made to him, with the event, unless he had been acquainted with a life after this? God promised to bless him, to be his God, and to give the land of Canaan to him and to his seed. That part of the promise, which relates to giving him the land of Canaan, might be satisfied, and Abraham might be aware that it was so, if the family was put in possession of this land, when they were numerous enough to occupy and defend it. He might know that, where a grant of any thing is made to a body of men collectively, no laws of compact ever understand the performance to consist in putting every individual in possession. But then the other parts of the promise, those, which related immediately to himself, were not made good by what his posterity enjoyed: *to be his God, to be his shield and his exceeding great reward* must signify blessings, that he himself was to be put in possession of; and he must be at a loss to know what those blessings could

Warburton V. II. p. 561.

could be, if he had been unacquainted with the hopes of another life. He was called away from his kindred and from his father's house; and was made to wander as a stranger in the land that was

Heb. XI. v. 9. given to his family; *he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob the heirs with him of the same promise.* By this he might understand, that the blessing promised to himself was not to consist in the possession of the land of Canaan: and the experience of his whole life would teach him, that, in every instance of temporal prosperity, others were in as good a condition as he was. Lot his brother's son was as wealthy and lived as happily as he did; for amidst all his affluence, there were unfortunate incidents enough to distress him, and to prevent him from enjoying the fortunes, which God

Gen XII. v. 10 11. 12. 17. 18. XX. v. 1. 2. had given him. Soon after he was come into the land of Canaan, a famine obliged him to go into Egypt: this journey, we may be sure, was undertaken much against his inclinations, and was attended with much hazard and uneasiness from the apprehensions, which the sacred historian informs us he was under, of losing his wife and of being murdered himself upon her account. The providence of God did indeed interpose in his favour; but such an interposition was not what Abraham relied upon either then, or afterwards at Gerar, where he made use of the same stratagem

gem again, of saying she was his sister, to preserve his life. But if the blessings, which the Patriarch expected through faith in God's promises, had been those of temporal felicity, he might have been sure those blessings would never fail, as long as he walked before God in perfectness and integrity. He would have been as little solicitous about going into Egypt, had God promised to secure to him, by His especial care, the happiness of this world, as he was about leaving his father and all his relations, to go into a country where he was a stranger, when God commanded him to go. And if the immediate guardianship of heaven, to protect him in all his ways and to make his whole life prosperous, had been what God by his promises directed him to rely upon; he would very ill have deserved the title of the *father of the faithful*, when after one signal interposition of providence to rescue him and his wife out of the hands of Pharaoh, he again, instead of trusting to the same favour of heaven, said, that Sarah was his sister, for fear of Abimelech. The uneasinesses in his family, the quarrels between Hagar and Sarah, which ended at last in his being forced to part with his son Ishmael, were doubtless considerable abatements of his happiness, too great to have happened to the *friend of God*, if no advantages but those of the present life were to be expected from this friendship.

Jacob

Jacob was heir to the promises of Abraham; but sure his inheritance was not that of earthly felicity. The fear of being killed by his Brother Esau; the mean condition, in which his father dismissed him, to make his own fortune amongst his relations; his servitude with Laban, and the cruel treatment that he met with from him; the long barrenness of his favourite wife, and the early loss of her; the bad behaviour of his children; the debauching of his daughter; and above all, the loss of Joseph; were sufficient reasons for him to complain as he did to Pharaoh, *that his days had been few and evil.*

Gen XXVII. v. 41. XXXII v. 7. XXXII. v. 10. Deuter. XXVI. v. 5. Gen XXXI. v. 36. &c. XXX v. 1. 2. XXXV v. 18. Gen. XXXVII. v. 2. XXXIV. v. 2. XXXVII. v. 35. XLVII. v. 9.

Certain it is, that God had increased the substance of the Patriarch, that he had given him, according to the blessing of Isaac, *of the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine*: but then there was affliction enough attending these favours to teach him not to look upon them as the only enjoyments designed for him. This he must have understood very early, from comparing the blessing bestowed upon himself with that, which was given to Esau. With the dominion over his brethren he received the peculiar blessing of the family, which, it was evident, could not consist in temporal felicity, because in this Esau was made equal to him. And if Jacob had not drawn this conclusion, if he had been made to trust in nothing but the good things

Sherlock on prophecy pag. 132.

of

of this world, nor had conceived that by the promise of God made to his family a better life was to be expected; either God failed in his promise by giving Jacob reason to complain as he did; or else the Patriarch failed in his faith and piety by making such a complaint without reason.

Since therefore Abraham and his immediate descendants had blessings promised to them by God, which He did not bestow upon them in this life, and which they do not seem to have expected He would bestow, whilst they continued here; how must we understand the promises made to them? or how did they understand them?—The author to the Hebrews has informed us:—*they looked for a city, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Since they sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country, since they had promises made to them, which they did not receive; they perceived themselves to be but strangers and pilgrims upon earth, and fixed their hopes upon a better country, that is, an heavenly.* Their faith assured them, that God could not fail of performing what he had engaged for; and, as he did not perform it in this life, they expected another. Heb. xi. v. 9. 10. 11. 13. 16.

The question at present is not whether Moses, in his history of the Patriarchs, has purposely omitted, or thrown into shade the accounts of those revelations, which, we learn from the new testament, some of them were actually favoured with, Warburton V. II p. 451

concerning the [h] redemption of mankind: for we are not enquiring now, what notice of a fu-

[h] Mr. Warburton [V. II. pag. 589.] has given another instance of Abraham's acquaintance with the redemption of mankind, in his manner of explaining God's command to him to offer up his son Isaac: and so very remarkable an instance it is, that I wish I could make use of it, to prove, that these doctrines of redemption and a future state were known to the Patriarchs. But I shall be forced to omit it upon account of some difficulties in it, which I am not able to clear up. The proposition, which he undertakes to prove, is, "that when God "says to Abraham, [Gen. XXII. v. 2.] *take now thy son, thine only "son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a burnt offering,* the "command is merely an information, by action instead of words, "of the great sacrifice for the redemption of mankind, given at the "earnest request of Abraham, who longed impatiently *to see Christ's "day*. The foundation of this he lays in that scripture, where Jesus "says to the unbelieving Jews, *your father Abraham rejoiced to see "my day and he saw it and was glad*, [Joh. XVIII. v. 17.] and, to clear "his way to the truth of this proposition, he undertakes to prove "that the doctrine of redemption was revealed to Abraham; and that "the history of this revelation is recorded in scripture." The former is most indisputably true, the authority of Christ has abundantly assured us of it. But Mr. W. is of opinion, "that the manner of this "great revelation is revealed in the text, as well as the matter; and "that when Christ tells the Jews, *your father Abraham rejoiced to see "my day, and he saw it and was glad*, he designs to inform them, "that the redemption of mankind was not only revealed to the "Patriarch, but was revealed likewise by representation. This he "confirms from the verb εἴδω made use of in this place, which in "the new testament frequently signifies to see sensibly: but whether "literally or figuratively it always denotes full intuition: and that "the expression was as strong in the Syriac language used by Jesus, "as here in the Greek of his historian, appears, he thinks, from the "reply the Jews made to him —— *Thou art not yet fifty years old and "hast thou seen Abraham*: plainly intimating, that they understood "the assertion of *Abraham's seeing Christ's day* to be a real behold-"ing him in person." But what can we conclude from the sense in which the Jews interpreted his words? they might designedly mistake his meaning, or pervert it, on purpose to have a fair pretence

for

ture itself the Israelites might have from reading the history of the Patriarchs in the books of Mo-

for stoning him: it is sure no good argument — The captious Jews understood him so, therefore he meant so. Though indeed the sense, in which the Jews interpreted the words of Jesus, will prove, not that the Patriarch saw such an action or was engaged in performing such an one as represented the mystery of redemption, but that he saw the redeemer himself: for thus it is plain they understood him; nor would they have had any difficulty in conceiving that Abraham might have seen an action representing what was to be done many ages after he lived: the question they ask is — *thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?* from whence it is clear, that, in the sense which they gave to his words, Abraham could not have seen Christ's day, but Christ must have had an opportunity of seeing his too: but this would not have been a necessary consequence, if by seeing they had understood seeing in representation by action. Εἴδω may signify seeing either literally, as when Isaiah [Joh. XII. v. 41.] is said to have *seen the glory of Christ*, or figuratively by the eye of faith, as when the Patriarchs are said [Heb. XI v. 13.] to have *died in faith not having received the promises but having seen them afar off*: but who could be said in either sense to have seen what he had only seen represented by such actions as the prophets made use of? or who can be said to have seen, in any proper sense of the word, what he has only seen a type of? When one of the prophets [Jerem. XXVII. v. 2.] made yokes and bonds and put them upon his neck to foreshew the conquest of Nebuchadnezzar over Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Zidon; no one, who looked on, would say, that he had seen those conquests: Nor could they be said to have seen the captivity of Zedekiah, who only saw Ezekiel removing his houshold goods. [Ezek. XII. v. 3.] Mr. W. in proving his second point, — that the history of that revelation of the redemption of mankind, which was made to Abraham, is recorded in scripture, sets out with observing from the history of Christ's ministry, "that in his disputations with "the Jews, he never urged them with any circumstance of God's "dispensations to their forefathers, which they either were not, "or might not be, well acquainted with, by the study of their scrip-"tures, and therefore he concludes from Jesus's own words, that "the circumstance of Abraham's knowledge of Christ's day must "be found in Abraham's history: but, the words of Jesus, he says,

ses; but what notices the Patriarchs themselves had. And in this question we may fairly urge the authority of the new testament; and may conclude, that Abraham himself had as certain a knowledge of a future state, as the Apostles and Evangelists say he had. Though as the author to the Hebrews shews what Abraham's faith was, from comparing the condition, in which he lived, with the promises made to him, one would think the same must have appeared to any one, who should read the book of Genesis, and should make the same comparison. And indeed it is not possible to supppose, that Abraham should conceal from his posterity the knowledge of those revelations, which he was favoured with. The character, that God himself gave of him was, *that he would command his children and his houshold after him, and they should keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.* But he would have been no very faithful instructor of his houshold, if he

Examin. of M. W's. 2d prop. p. 28.

Gen. XVIII. v. 19.

" imply, that Abraham earnestly sollicited the God of heaven to " reveal to him the mystery of man's redemption; they express that " tumultuous pleasure, which he felt from the certain expectations of " the approach of this blessing; that action, which, according to the " common mode of information at that time, he was commanded " to do; and that calm and settled joy, which arises from the pos- " session of a much wished for blessing." But which of all these particulars can be found in the history of God's command to Abraham, related in such a manner that, not the *carnal-minded Jews*, for these Mr. W. himself excepts, but those amongst them, who studied the scriptures, might be well acquainted with the facts and circumstances

to

had only taught them what God required of them, without letting them know the proper engagements and motives to obedience. If it at all concerned him, to take care, that his posterity should walk before God as he did, and be perfect, as he was; it was necessary for him to give them the same hopes, that he had: for it would have been unreasonable to expect such an obedience, as he preserved through his whole conduct, from those, who had not any intimation of the promises, by which his obedience was supported.

And in fact we find that the knowledge of the true God, and of the relation, which he bore to Abraham, was handed down by him to his posterity: for when Moses was commissioned to go to the Israelites in the name of God, and he enquires by what title he should call Him, that they might know from whom he came; he was directed to tell them, that he came from the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham the God of Isaac

Examin. of Mr. W's. 2d prop. p. 31.

Exod. c. III. v. 7. 10. 13. 14. 15.

to which Christ here appeals? if all or the principal of them, then the knowledge, which Abraham had of a future state is not so industriously concealed by Moses, as Mr. W. elsewhere seems to think; but if none of them or only the most obscure, such as scarce shew to the most laborious enquirer what knowledge of the redemption Abraham was favoured with, then either Jesus does appeal to circumstances, which the common Jews could not be acquainted with, and which the more learned might easily miss of, and so his premises are false; or else that command is not what Jesus referred to, and so the conclusion is not true.

Isaac and the God of Jacob. And as in this title he includes his whole relation to the Patriarchs, and their claim to the blessings, which he had promised them; one cannot easily believe, that the name would be conveyed down in the family, and the nature of those blessings be kept a secret in it. This passage in the book of Exodus our blessed Lord makes use of to prove that at least a future existence of the soul may be plainly inferred from the writings of Moses: and though his argument was a new one, though the Pharisees had never made this inference, and therefore it does not appear from hence, that Moses inculcated the doctrine of a future state; yet as it was a conclusive argument, as it was an inference, which might have been made, it will prove to us, that Moses was not studious to conceal this doctrine, nor purposely omitted every thing, that might bring his readers acquainted with those notices of redemption and of another life, which the Patriarchs were favoured with.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Obedience to the will of God was enforced under the Mosaic dispensation by the hopes of a future life, as well as by the promises of temporal happiness.

FRom the death of the Patriarch Jacob to the time of Moses we have no account of any revelation, which God made either to mankind in general, or to any particular nation or family. But when the Israelites were delivered out of the slavery, in which they had been kept by the Egyptians, and were going to take possession of the land promised to their fathers; God was pleased to give them a law, which was intended to keep them distinct from the rest of the world.

By this law he neither abrogated the religion of the Patriarchs, nor superseded the promises made to them; if we may depend upon the authority of St. Paul, who says of the Mosaic law, *that it was added because of transgression, till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made.* I cannot better explain these words of the Apostle than by those of a late learned and very ingenious writer.—"It was added:—to what? surely to "the religion of the Patriarchs:—to what end? "because of transgressions, that is the idolatrous "devia-

Gal. III. v. 19.

Warburton V. II. p. 361.

" deviations from that religion: into which ido-
" latry the rest were already gone and the Jews then
" hastening apace; and from which they could be
" restrained no otherwise than by this addition,
" that kept them separate from all others; and
" preserved the doctrine of the *Unity* till the com-
" ing of the promised seed." But if the positive precepts of the law were only additions to the Patriarchal duties, and the latter continued, after the former were enjoyned; sure it is reasonable to conclude, that the temporal sanctions of the law were added to the promises, which God had before made to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and that the hopes, which the Patriarchs entertained of a future life, were no more superseded by the promise of temporal happiness, than the moral duties, which they practised, were set aside by the positive ones of the law. One religion was added whole and entire to the other, the precepts of the Mosaic law to those of that law, by which the father of the faithful had governed his conduct, and the encouragements of temporal blessings to those of eternal life. The Apostle's whole reasoning is intended to shew, that the law did not make void these promises, nor lead off the expectations of the Israelites from them; but was a means of keeping up their hopes of obtaining the blessing of Abraham, and was *their school-master to bring them to Christ.* In what manner the law did

did produce this effect, shall be shewn in another place; it is enough for the present purpose that we have St. Paul's authority for saying it was designed to produce it. See chap XIII.

If we look into the law itself, we find that the Abrahamic covenant was expresly made a part of that sanction, by which obedience was enforced under the Mosaic dispensation. *Ye stand*, says Moses, *this day all of you before the Lord your God: your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel; your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger, that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood, unto the drawer of thy water: that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day; that he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.* Whatever therefore was contained in the Patriarchal covenant, was promised in the law: in whatever manner God had sworn to be a God to Abraham and to his seed after him, in the same manner he engaged to be a God to the Israelites; as long as they continued obedient to his commands. So that they had a right to every part of those promises, which God made to their forefathers, as well in virtue of the law, that was established upon every part

Deuter. XXIX. v. 10. &c.

 of

of the Abrahamic covenant without distinction, as in virtue of the promises themselves, that were made in such terms as to belong, not to Abraham only, but to his seed after him: for God promised the same blessings to him, and to all his posterity, and engaged to be a God to his posterity, in the same manner that he was to himself. This St. Paul intimates, when he says, *that to the Israelites pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.* If God made more covenants than one, or if only one consisting of several parts; if he made promises to Abraham both of temporal blessings and of a life to come, they all pertained to the Israelites: and the Apostle has taken care to express himself in such a manner, as to shew his design of including every hope, which the revelation made to Abraham could possibly have raised, and of representing them all as common to him with his posterity.

Rom. IX. v. 4.

But besides the assurance, which we have, that the blessing of Abraham, was conveyed down to his descendants, and was made a part of that sanction, upon which the Mosaic law was established; if we interpret the promises of life and happiness, that were made in the law, so as to make them intelligible and consistent with themselves and with the event; or if we follow the authority of Christ and his Apostles in interpreting them; we shall

shall find that those, who lived under the Mosaic dispensation, had the hopes of a future state given them to enforce their obedience to the will of God.

The book of Genesis is an introduction to the law, and begins with an account of our first parents having lost eternal life; the law itself concludes with this sanction *this do and thou shalt live.* And if there is any connection between the proeme and the sanction; if one may be used as a comment upon the other; then it would be no improbable conclusion, that the life, which was promised, was the same with that, which had been forfeited; that as eternal life had been lost by disobeying a former appointment of God, so what was to be recovered by observing those new ones contained in the law, must be eternal life too. Lev. xviii v. 5.

The history of mankind contained in this book would bring them acquainted with two remarkable changes, that had happened, since the first creation, in regard to the time man was to continue in life: the former at the fall, according to the penalty threatened, *in the day thou eatest of it, thou shalt surely die*, and to the execution of that penalty, *dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*; the latter at the flood, when it was decreed that the age of man should for the future commonly not exceed an hundred and twenty years; though before that time the usual age had been between eight and nine hundred. When

therefore they heard *life* promised to them again, if they obeyed the law; they could not but expect, that one of these inconveniencies was to be removed; either that of being deprived of their hopes of immortality, or that of having their life so much shortened. But if the Psalm, which goes under the name of Moses, was really written by him; their legislator himself had furnished them with such a comment as would certainly prevent them from concluding, that their lives were to be protracted to any thing near the length of their's, who lived before the flood. He taught them that they were to be still shorter than the decree at the flood had left them, that *the days of our age are but threescore years and ten*, and that a longer life is far from being a blessing: for, if any one's constitution should be strong enough to bear him out to fourscore years, he would find nothing in it worth desiring, *nothing but labour and sorrow.* Or if they had not this comment to guide them, till after the times of Moses; yet their own experience would soon have convinced them of the same thing, and would have taught them that the meaning of what the law promised was not that the lives of those, who obeyed the law, would be lengthened out to the old standard. But neither all nor any part of the days, that were struck off from the life of man at the flood, were designed to be restored by that promise of life, which

Psalm xc.

Psalm xc. v. 10.

which the law had made; they must conclude, that the reward designed for those, who were obedient, must be the life, that had been forfeited at the fall.

There were some remarkable instances before the captivity, which make it impossible for any one, who is acquainted with them, to believe, that God had promised a longer life than ordinary to such as should obey him; unless we can believe at the same time, that God could fail in making good his promises. The character, which the sacred history gives of Josiah, is, that *like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.* And what was the event of all this piety? Surely if God had promised length of days to those, who were exact in the observance of their duty, this good and religious prince must have been gathered to his fathers at a good old age. But instead of this we find that he died a violent death, when he was only thirty nine years old. One of the historians gives this account of his engaging in the war with Necho, in which he was killed; *Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates, and Josiah went out against him: but he sent embassadors to him, saying, what have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I came not*

2 Kings XXIII. v. 25.

2 Kings XXII v. 1. XXIII. v. 29.

2 Chron. XXXV. v 20. &c.

not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make hast: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him; and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. This gives Josiah's last act the appearance of disobedience to the command of God and of rebellion against his authority: so that his untimely death may perhaps be looked upon as the punishment of his crime. But why was Josiah to give more credit to what Necho said about God's being with him, than Hezekiah had done before him to Sennacherib the king of Assyria, who affirmed, *that he was not come up against Jerusalem without the Lord, but the Lord had said unto him, go up against this land and destroy it?* Hezekiah indeed consulted with Isaiah in what he did: and it is so unlikely, that, if what Necho said had been true, Jeremiah would, even unasked, have neglected to advise Josiah; that some of the commentators have, without any appearance of reason from the passage itself, ventured to affirm, that the word of the Lord, which Josiah hearkened not to, was the advice of this prophet. But be that as it will: it is most certain that God himself looked upon the untimely death of Josiah, not as a

2 Kings XVIII. v. 25.

a punishment, but as a reward of his piety. For he had by Huldah the prophetess made him this promise; *because thine heart was tender, and thou* 2 Chron. *didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest* XXXIV. v. 28. *his words against Jerusalem, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord. Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil, that I will bring upon this place and upon the inhabitants of the same.* This might indeed be a comfort to the king, though death put an end to all his expectations; because he might think it better not to be at all, than to be miserable: but it cannot possibly be reconciled with the law, nor in any sense be called a reward, if Moses under the notion of life had promised nothing to the righteous but length of days here, and had given them no hopes of any thing hereafter.

When the wife of Jeroboam was sent by her 1 Kings XIV v. 2. 3. husband to enquire of Ahijah the prophet, what should become of their child, that was fallen sick; the prophet threatens destruction to the whole house of Jeroboam and calamities, which related indeed to the body only, yet such as should pursue them even after death: *Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat, and him that dieth in the*

the field shall the fowls of the air eat. But as to the child in particular, that she came to enquire about, he answers, that at her return, *as soon as she entered the city, he should die, and all Israël should mourn for him and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.* A most unaccountable reward this for innocence and piety under a dispensation, which promised nothing but a long and happy life here! the rest of the family were to be eaten by the dogs or by the fowls of the air, but he should come to the grave, because in him only there was some good found. Had he lived long and come to the grave in peace, the reward would have been such as, in a law promising none but temporal rewards, ought to have been bestowed: but he was to die in his infancy; and the only difference, worth regarding, between him and those, who had displeased God, was, that he was to die much younger than they: for, that they were after death to be exposed to the birds and the beasts, but that he was to be buried, was not very material; nor could this be fulfilling those sanctions of the law, which promise life to the good and threaten death to the bad.

Ibid. v. 12. Ibid. v. 11. 13.

It is true, both these instances happened after the people had demanded a king, and after God had complied with their demand, and had set a

Warburton V. II. p. 445.

king

king over them: at which time the vigour of the extraordinary providence has been represented was "abating and from thence to the captivity decaying gradually, till on their full settlement, after their return it intirely ceased." But had temporal rewards and punishments, administered by an equal providence, been the only sanction of the law of Moses; then either the prophets established it upon fresh sanctions, contrary to what the lawmaker intimates, that he had set before the people motives sufficient to enforce their obedience, and contrary to what he declares, that nothing was afterwards to be added to the law; or else, as it was gradually deprived of its sanction, the obligation of it grew continually weaker, till at last, after the people were returned from the captivity, it must have ceased to oblige them at all. For whatever may be the case of God's moral laws, yet most certainly, as he withdraws the sanctions of his positive ones, he takes off something from their obligation, and, when he has wholly withdrawn the promise of reward and the threatning of punishment, those laws oblige no longer. But it is plain that the law continued in full force till the captivity; and the preparations, which Ezra and Nehemiah made, for the future observance of it, at the people's return, sufficiently shew that they thought it continued in force afterwards. Though whenever the equal administration of

Deuteron. XXX. v. 19. 20.

IV. v. 2.

providence ceased intirely is not material to these two examples of what in a law, which promised no life but the present, would have been a most notorious inequality: for neither of them could be owing to the gradual decay of an extraordinary providence. The hand of God appears, by the prophet Ahijah's account, to have been immediately concerned in the death of Jeroboam's child: and God had, by express promise, engaged Himself to make the death of Josiah such as might happen to and even be desired by the most exact observer of the law. Whatever inequalities had arisen from the withdrawing God's especial care, they would have appeared in cases where things were left to the administration of ordinary laws; and not in those, which were as certainly under God's direction as any events, that had ever been brought about during the whole continuance of the Jewish state.

We see too from these two examples and from the declaration of God about them, that, in the circumstances of the Israelites, the law must be established upon other promises than those of a long continuance here; and that the life it was to bestow upon the good and virtuous, must, if it was designed to be a constant and steady reward to them, mean something different from length of days, for this would frequently be a punishment. In a general corruption of manners, when by the

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extraordinary providence over the ſtate in general, the whole nation was to be carried captive into the land of their enemies; *when they ſhould* Deuter. XXVIII. v. 51. 53.
be beſieged in all their gates, and be compelled to eat the fleſh of their ſons and of their daughters; it could be no reward to the pious, that their life was prolonged to ſee the miſery of their country, and to have their ſhare in it. Can we think that Jeremiah ſuffered nothing upon his own account, when, beſides being involved in the common diſtreſs, whilſt the city was beſieged, he was perſecuted, beaten, and impriſoned? could his virtue ſo harden his heart as to make him an unconcerned ſpectator of the calamities of his countrymen, his friends, and his relations? if he had not been moſt ſincerely intereſted in the welfare of the public, or had not even felt himſelf what others ſuffered; could he have put himſelf in the place of the children of his people and have complained in that pathetic manner? *Is it nothing to* Lament. I. v. 12. 13. 15. 16.
you, all ye that paſs by? behold and ſee, if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. From above hath he ſent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth againſt them: he hath ſpread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me deſolate and faint all the day. The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midſt of me: he hath called an

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assembly against me to crush my young men. The Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah as in the wine press. For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter, that shou'd relieve my soul, is far from me. What then was to become of the righteous man in these circumstances, supposing he had nothing to expect hereafter? if his days were prolonged, he must be miserable; and if they were shortened, where was the promise of life, and where his reward?—The prophet Isaiah has informed us what would be best for him and upon what he might fix his hopes in this calamitous
Isai. LVII. v. 1 2. condition: *the righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their* [1] *beds, each one walking in his uprightness.* How like is this to what was said by
Wisdom III. v. 1. 2. 3. one, who lived under the same dispensation! *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them: in the sight of the unwise they seemed to die and their departure*

[1] The word מִשְׁכָּב which we translate *a bed*, can signify nothing but *the grave* in this place, for that is the only bed where the righteous, each one that walketh in his uprightness, can rest after he is taken away. The LXX have rendered it ταφὴ, and though this is the only place in which they do render it so, yet in one passage, where they translate it κλίνη, it must mean such a bed as dead bodies are laid in: [2 Chron. XVI. v. 15.] *and they buried him* [Asa] *in his own sepul-*

is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace.

These two passages of the prophet and of the supposed Solomon would almost determine one to interpret the words of the true Solomon in their most obvious sense: *the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death.* This later writer, whoever he was, has here been alledged not as an authority to prove, that the law promised a future life, but as a comment upon the words of Isaiah: and the only use that was intended to be made of the passage from this prophet, was to shew, from an authentic interpreter, in what manner we are to account for such an inequality as happened in the instance of Jeremiah. But they, who lived long before Jeremiah, might be sure that such cases were possible, and that they would, in the course of an extraordinary providence over the state in general, very frequently happen. And one, who had never read Isaiah, could hardly fail of accounting for this necessary inequality in the same manner that he does; if he was only assured that God could

Prov. xiv. v. 32.

sepulchres, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed [בְּמִשְׁכָּב ἐν τῇ κλίνῃ] *which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecary's art: and they made a very great burning for him.*——This would be a poor reward for the righteous, to rest in their graves, unless their works followed them.

could not make a promise, which in the event he did not fulfil, nor establish his law upon such a sanction, as was impossible to be made good in the most afflicting circumstances of the virtuous, that is, when they had the greatest occasion for his interposition to support them. Or if there never had been any man before with sagacity and faith enough to discover, that when God makes an universal promise of life to the good, which in many instances it is impossible for Him to bestow here, He must be understood of a life after this: yet however blind or faithless man might be, God could not fail of performing his word: God's design and the meaning of his promise was always the same, whether man perceived it or not; and what the prophet said was only to explain a former sanction of the law and, not by a fresh commission from the legislator to add a new one.

It may indeed be replied; that the life, which is promised in the law, is that of the public rather than of individuals; that it does not mean length of days to be bestowed upon particular persons for obeying the law, but a long continuance of the political life, the preservation of the state for many generations in a flourishing and happy condition, by an extraordinary providence, which should watch over the welfare of the whole, as long as religion was cultivated by the generality,

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as long as the public in its collective capacity, or as a body politic, was obedient to the commands of God. In the mean time such a life was granted to particular persons, who obeyed God's will, as is the only one, that deserves the name; a life, which consisted, not in having their days lengthned beyond the common standard, but in being made happy, whilst they continued here: an immediate providence supplyed the virtuous and religious with all the temporal enjoyments, which were worth having; it secured the possession of them as long as they were worth keeping; and at last kindly removed the true worshipers of God from hence, though not into other enjoyments, yet into freedom from misery, whenever their own condition, that of their families, or that of the public would have made it a misfortune to have had their days prolonged.

I grant that an extraordinary providence of this sort was actually promised and is represented in scripture to have been sometimes administered. But it does not follow that because temporal rewards and punishments were the sanction of the Mosaic law and religion, therefore future were not. And upon enquiry we shall find, that unless future rewards and punishments, as well as present, are included in the sanctions of that law, they cannot be so explained as to be either intelligible or consistent.

Let

(Warburton. V. II. p. 446.) Let us see whither we shall be led by the following conclusion, "an extraordinary providence was "promised in the law of Moses, and is represented "in scripture to have been really administered; "therefore temporal rewards and punishments, the "effects of this providence, and not future, were "the sanction of that law and religion." The scripture promises that an extraordinary providence shall watch over the affairs of Christians, and represents this promise to have been sometimes actually fulfilled. But who would conclude from hence, that temporal rewards and punishments, the proper effects of this providence, and not future, are therefore the sanction of Christianity? The conclusion is not just in either case; since God, by promising and bestowing present rewards, does not render it impossible for him to promise and bestow future ones: it is however as just in Christianity as it is in the law; it must be equally true in both instances, or equally false in both.

That the Gospel promises an extraordinary providence over private men, who should engage in the service of Christ, is beyond all doubt. Matt. XIX. v. 29. *Every one*, says our Saviour, *that hath forsaken houses or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold.* And in his sermon on the Matt. VI. v. 31. 32. 33. mount, he bids his disciples *take no thought for their life, what they should eat, or what they should drink;*

drink; or wherewithall they should be clothed (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for their heavenly father knew that they had need of all these things: but, if they would seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, he promises, *that all these things should be added unto them.* These are very different from the common blessings of life, which are bestowed promiscuously: gifts, that are limited to such as forsake all things to follow Christ, to such as seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, cannot be those of an ordinary providence, in the administration of which the Parent of all is equally kind to all His creatures; *He maketh his sun to rise on the evil as well as the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.* Matt. V. v. 16.
If the special blessings, which Solomon, at the dedication of his temple, prayed that God would bestow on every one, who should spread forth his hands to that house, were of a temporal nature; yet his prayer was not conceived in more express terms than the promises, which Christ made of bestowing blessings of all sorts on those, who asked him. 1 Kings VIII. v. 37. 38. 39. Warburton V. II. p. 435.
If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing, that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my father, which is in heaven: for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do it. That these promises were to be in force no longer than till Christianity was Matt. XVIII. v. 19. 20. Joh. XIV. v. 14.

established, does not appear. God has made no such declaration; but another promise made by
Matt XXVIII. v. 20. Christ, *behold I am with you always even unto the end of the world*, has been thought to imply the contrary? Or what if these promises of extraordinary blessings were temporary? Were not those made by the law temporary too? did not they fail
Warburton V. II. p. 445. entirely after the captivity; and do not even those, who contend, that they were the only proper sanction of the law, confess that they began to fail much sooner? So that, if from extraordinary blessings in this life, which were to be continued to the Israelites only for a certain time, and were to cease before the law was abrogated, we may conclude that they had no blessings promised them in a world to come; the ceasing of the same sort of blessings promised to Christians can be no reason for this conclusion being weaker, when applied to our religion, than it is, when applied to theirs.

If it should be asked where is this particular providence over Christians represented in scripture to have been administered? to whom were these promises ever fulfilled?—We may answer, to St. Peter,
Acts XII. v 6. &c. when he was delivered out of prison; to St. Paul,
2 Tim. IV. v. 16. 17 when, after all men had forsaken him, the Lord
Acts XXVII. v. 22. 23 24. stood with him and strengthened him; to the same Apostle, when he was himself delivered from the perils of the shipwreck, and all, that sailed with him, were, by the especial care of God, preserved

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upon his account; to all the primitive Christians, Acts II. v. 46. 47. IV. v. 34.
when there was not one of them that lacked,
when they eat their meat with gladness, and had
favour with all people; and lastly (though the
scripture history does not reach so far) to all the Euseb. Hist. Eccles. L. III. c. 5.
Christians, who dwelt at Jerusalem, when they
were so remarkably delivered at the time that the
city was besieged. Or if a parabolical command Warburton V. II. p. 436.
in the prophecy of Ezekiel will shew, how exactly
the promises of an extraordinary providence over
particulars were fulfilled to the Israelites; a command of the same sort in the book of Revelations
will prove, that these promises were as exactly fulfilled to Christians. The words of Ezekiel are; Ezek. IX. v. 4.
and the Lord said unto him, go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations, that be done in the midst thereof. And to others he said in mine hearing, go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark. The passage in the Reve- Rev. VII. v. 1. 2. 3.
lations is perfectly like it, and the margin of our
English bible refers us to it; *After these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth nor on the*

 sea,

sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees; till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

2 Cor. XV v. 19. The complaint of St. Paul that *if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*, is no more inconsistent with the belief of an extraordinary providence administering the affairs of Christians, than the promise of such an administration under the law was with the like 1 Kings XIX. v. 14. complaint of Elijah; *I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.* And I doubt not that at this time 1 Kings XIX. v. 18. he and many of the *seven thousand, whom God had reserved for himself in Israel*, might have used the words of the Apostle, *if in this life only we have hope* from the law, *we are of all men most miserable.* Upon the whole therefore, we find that the [k] *promise of the life, that now is, has been made*

[k] There is another sense given by Mr. Warburton [V. II. p. 468.] to the text here alluded to. [1 Tim. IV. v. 8.] "Though numerous "ritual observances were enjoined by the law, and some there must "needs be under the Gospel, wherever there is a church; yet they "are of little advantages in comparison of moral observances; which under

to Christians under the Gospel dispensation, and we know that it does not exclude them from the promise *of that which is to come.* From whence it follows that temporal rewards and punishments, engaged for by the law, do by no means shew that it made no promise of a future life: for what is compatible in one instance, may be so in the other; and such united hopes, as are the sanction of Christianity, might, if it so pleased the legislator, be the sanction of the Mosaic law too.

That this was the design of the legislator will appear from considering, that some of the legal sanctions are either unintelligible or inconsistent upon any other supposition. It is indisputably certain that the law promised public prosperity to the Israelites, as long as they should continue obedient to the commands of God, and that it threatened public calamities, whenever a general corruption of manners and neglect of duty should prevail. But if the extraordinary providence watched over the state only, and did not at the same time take ... ense rewards and punishments with ... hand to particulars; though the nation ... not be made happy, but some at least of ... members must be so too; yet the worst men

" under both religions, had the proper reward of each annexed to " them ... : namely, under the Jewish, the rewards of the life, " that now is; under the Christian, of that which is to come."— But it does not appear from the law, that it's temporal promises were annexed to moral observances only; the ritual ones are all

along,

in it might frequently have a share [illegible] the natio-nal advantages, and the best might at the same time be excluded from them. *Just* as it happens in the government of the whole world; where, though every thing is calculated for the good of the system, though the welfare of mankind in general is under the care of God's ordinary providence; yet the best men do not always enjoy the blessings of heaven, and the worst have too often the largest share of them. This would have been poor encouragement to an Israelite to be exact in keeping the law, when all, which he could propose by it, was only to make the state prosperous; whilst he himself, how instrumental soever in advancing the common happiness, was but to take his chance for enjoying any part of it, and might probably never taste the fruit of his piety.

The Israelites, if these were all the promises that they had to trust to, could not be so selfish a people, as they have been represented; there must,

along enjoined under the same penalties, and the [illegible] as far as appears from the law, is every where en[illegible] same hopes as that of the others. And it would be of [illegible] to St. Paul's argument, when he is condemning ritual ob[illegible] in Christians, to urge that moral observances under the la[illegible] encouraged by the proper sanction of that dispensation, unless he had proved, that they only had this encouragement: since otherwise the judaizers would see no reason for giving the preference to these observances, when in the law the same promise of the life that now is was annexed to ceremonies of positive institution.

To prove that the promise of the life that now is does not relate to the Christian dispensation, Mr. Warburton urges the words of St. Paul:

if this was the Mosaic dispensation, have been more public spirit in that religion than in any other. The heathen legislators inculcated such doctrines as made it worth the while to die for the public; and the Christian, who lays down his life for his friends, is entitled to the reward of those, who imitate their Master. But the Israelite, if nothing had been promised to individuals either in this life or another, must have been far more disinterested than either heathen or Christian: for otherwise he could not have persevered in observing the law, amidst all the discouragements of his own calamitous circumstances, with no other view but to contribute, as much as was in his power, to the good of his country. But it is not material to determine what was the peculiar temper of the Israelites, whether they were more selfish or more disinterested than the rest of the world. If they were only men and had common feeling, it is scarce credible that God would

Paul; [1 Cor. xv. v. 18.] *if in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable.* I have endeavoured to shew in the text, that this complaint might be made even where we are sure there was the promise of temporal rewards: but, whether this is proved or no, Mr. Warburton certainly misunderstood the passage: for he says, that in order to take "the force of their words, we must consider, "that they were addressed to Jewish converts tainted with Saddu- "cisim." But no sense given to the text upon this supposition can be the true one, because St. Paul himself says to the Corinthians, *Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols.* [1 Cor. xii. v. 2.]

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enjoin them a positive law containing many precepts, the observance of which belonged rather to individuals than to the public, and yet that He would give to each pious and devout observer of His will no better encouragement to do what the law of nature did not require of them, than a precarious reward, an accidental share only of that happiness, which was bestowed upon the collective body.

But that is not always most proper for God to do, which appears most proper to us: and therefore it is possible, that the sanctions of the law might not relate to individuals, though we may think, that, if they did not, they would have been insufficient to enforce the observance of it. Let us therefore consult the law itself. *Ye stand*, says Moses, *this day all of you before the Lord your God: your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel; your little ones, your wives and your stranger, that is in the camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day: that he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath, but with him, that standeth here with us this day,*

Deuter XXIX v. 10. &c.

day, before the Lord our God, and also with him, that is not here with us this day: least there should be among you, man or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations[1].

What I have quoted of this passage is sufficient to shew that the sanctions of the law, both the rewards and punishments of it, belonged not only to the nation in general but to particular persons too. The commentators are not agreed as to the sense of what follows. —*Lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood; and it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk after the imagination of mine heart to add drunkenness to thirst:* (or, as it is in the margin, the drunken to the thirsty:) *the Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses, that are written in this book shall lie upon him: and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven: and the Lord shall separate him unto evil, out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant, that are written in this book of the law.* הַצְּמֵאָה here translated *thirst* or *thirsty*, may have the same signification with the Latin word *siccus*, which is joined by Petronius Arbiter to the word *sobrius* and used in almost the same sense with it; —*sicca*, sobria, et bonorum consiliorum. [pag. 12. Edit. Amstel. 1669.] The same word signifies *sober* or *abstemious* in the beginning of the fragment of Cicero's oration against Rullus before the Senate. —Haec, per Deos immortales, utrum esse vobis consilia *siccorum*, an vinolentorum somnia—videntur? And in this sense it is used in the Asinaria of Plautus, Act. v. scen. 2.

At, scelesta! ego, praeter alios, meum virum fui rata
Siccum, frugi, continentem, amantem uxoris maxime.

The words לְמַעַן סְפוֹת may be translated *because there is an adding* or *because he adds* the drunken to the thirsty, that is, because he joins them together in the same common fate. In such a sense Horace uses the word *addo*, Od. 2. lib. 3.

——Saepe Diespiter
Neglectus incesto addidit integrum.

 And

Their legislator was, we find, very careful to inform them, that the *covenant and oath* of the Lord, *to be their God*, belonged to particulars, and that each member of the nation was concerned in the precepts which it enjoined, in the blessings which it promised, and in the curses which it threatened. And we have already seen that the extraordinary providence to the state would sometimes clash in such a manner with what was thus promised to particulars, as to leave them without any motive to obedience; unless they expected to find that the promises of God reached to a life beyond the present, and that he would be sure to make those promises good, either here or hereafter. And thus the necessary share, which the best and most religious must bear in the public calamity,

And ספות as it is a gerund has an indefinite signification, and may be referred to God as well as to the person, who blesses himself. Or since the same word signifies *to consume* as well as *to add*, and since it is no uncommon thing, amongst the Hebrew writers, to make one vice stand for all, and the avoiding of one vice stand for all virtue, הָרוה אֶת־הַצְּמֵאָה ebrium cum sicco, *the drunken with the sober*, may mean *the righteous with the wicked*; and we may translate the sentence thus,—*because he consumes the righteous with the wicked.* The comfort, which the wicked man, the root bearing gall and wormwood, might be supposed to give himself, was, that no particular harm was likely to happen to him in person, let him do what he would; since the threatenings of God were general and affected the whole nation, cutting off the good and the bad promiscuously. To prevent this, Moses assures the Israelites, that it was otherwise, and that not only tribes and families, but individuals, each man and each woman, were concerned in all the curses of the covenant, and especially that he, who ventured to sin upon the contrary presumption, should be sure to feel that it was so.

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wherever God thought fit to punish a national corruption, would discharge each person from his obedience to such precepts, as had nothing but the hopes of a temporal reward to enforce them.

But the sanctions of the law, if they had been only temporal, would frequently have clashed with each other too, so as to cancel it's obligation. When the innocent and virtuous posterity of a wicked man were condemned to suffer for the crimes of their parent, it would avail them nothing to serve God: they could not be made happy in this life, and at the same time bear the iniquity of their fathers; they could not suffer what the law threatened, and enjoy what it promised, if it had promised nothing but present happiness. And as the

Exod. XX. v. 5.

Deuter. XI. v. 27. 28. XXX. v. 15.

There is a passage in Jeremiah, [c. VII. v. 10.] where לְמַעַן with a gerund is used much in the same manner, and where our English version may be corrected. The words are נִצַּלְנוּ לְמַעַן עֲשׂוֹת אֵת כָּל־הַתּוֹעֵבֹת הָאֵלֶּה we translate the whole passage, *will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other Gods, whom ye know not; and come and stand in this house, which is called by my name, and say,* we are delivered to do all these abominations? But the word נִצַּלְנוּ may signify *we are spoiled*, and then if we translate לְמַעַן עֲשׂוֹת *because we have done*, the whole sentence will be —*we are spoiled, because we have done all these abominations.* This makes a break in the sentence, where the pause is in the original, and agrees very well with the prophet's design in this chapter; for he was here exhorting the nation to be sincere in turning to God: and it was very proper upon this occasion to take notice of their present hypocrisy, and to acquaint them, that it was to no purpose to come into the house of God and confess with their mouths, that the evils, which they suffered, were brought upon them for their crimes; so long as they continued without scruple to practice them.

motives, which their lawgiver had set before them, were *life and good, and death and evil; a blessing, if they obeyed the commandment of the Lord their God; and a curse, if they refused to obey*; whenever these motives failed, as in the case before us they must fail, if the law had been supported by temporal rewards and punishments only; whenever they, who obeyed the law, could not be blessed, nor be even more fatally accursed, though they should rebel against God, than they found themselves already; in these circumstances the law would lose all its authority, and one generation of men, by entailing a curse upon their posterity, would make the observance of it of little or no importance to those, who succeeded them.

It is as difficult to make out the justice of this dispensation, unless we take in the hopes of a future state, as to shew it to be either consistent or sufficient to produce a constant and uniform observance of the law. "The violence indeed of "irregular passions might make some sort of men, "of stronger complexions, superior to all the fear "of personal temporal evil: and an ascendent "might frequently be gained over the most de- "termined by punishments, that should extend "to the posterity of wicked men, as the instinc- "tive fondness of parents to their offspring would "make such punishments terrible even to those, "who have hardened themselves into an insensi- "bility

Warburton V. II. p. 251.

"bility of personal ones." But the great question here has been, not whether this method of punishing would be most effectual in securing the observance of the law, but whether it is a just method; not whether the end of God's government would be most certainly brought about by inflicting upon an innocent posterity the punishment of crimes, in the guilt of which they were unconcerned, but whether the goodness and justice of God would permit him to make any of his creatures miserable, unless they had deserved it; those more especially, who, though they were descended from criminal parents, had by their own obedience to his will, and in virtue of his promises, an express claim to happiness. For the end might be good and just, and yet the means be quite the reverse. The absolute dominion of God over His creatures, may vindicate His justice in taking away that life and those blessings, when and in what manner He pleases, which were originally His gifts, and were bestowed upon such a precarious title, as gave no claim to them, only during His pleasure. But then He must take away the life with the blessings; for He could no more, consistently with His goodness, leave those miserable, whom He had once made happy, and who had never offended Him, than He could, consistently with the same goodness, have made them miserable at first; and His justice would not allow

Grot. de jur. bell. et pac. L. II. c. 21. §. 14.

low Him to recall either life or blessings, that are ascertained to the possessors, by express promise. When He says, *he who doth my statutes shall live in them*, when He *sets before them a blessing*, and engages to bestow it *if they obeyed the commandment of the Lord their God*; He had no longer an *absolute* dominion over these gifts of His, the promise that He had made having given to them, who kept his statutes and obeyed his commandments, such a claim as could not be justly superseded for the iniquity of any other person. But it is urged that "the consequence of the Theocracy, in "which God supported the Israelites by an extraordinary providence, was great temporal "blessings given them on condition, and to which "they had no natural claim: so that these extraordinary blessings, like fiefs of the crown, "became forfeit upon violating those conditions, "under which they are held; and therefore nothing could be more equitable than to with-"draw them from the children of a father thus "offending[m]. But how were the children punish-

Warburton V. II. p. 457.

[m] This is one principle upon which the learned Mr. Warburton vindicates this dispensation; but it is not the only one. For first he represents it as a part of a civil institution [V. II. pag. 455.] given by God to this people, of which he was the tutelary Deity and civil governour; and observes, that it is the practice in all states to punish the crime of lese majesty in this manner, and that, to render it just, nothing more is requisite than it's being in the compact (as it was here) on man's free entrance into society.——But what were the blessings, which according to the original contract were to be forfeited by the children for the crimes of their parents? were they all

ed? Not barely by withdrawing these extraordinary blessings only, but either by making them miserable, whilst they lived, or by depriving them of life itself. The withdrawing special favours, held under an extraordinary providence, would have left them to that common providence, which overlooks and takes care of the affairs of all mankind: but sometimes they had positive evils inflicted upon them; and sometimes their life was the forfeiture; in which case they certainly lost, not any peculiar blessing granted to those who lived under a Theocracy, but one of those natural ones, which God bestows promiscuously upon all mankind.

But let the life and happiness promised by the law reach beyond the grave, and then the obligation to obey it becomes uniform and constant, it's sanctions are reconciled and their justice is vindicated. No motives or encouragement to obey God's will could ever be wanting to those, who were, if it was possible, to be made happy here; and if it was not, had reason to expect that they should be made so hereafter.

all the blessings, which God bestows upon any of his creatures? or those only, which were the effects of an extraordinary providence, and were held as fiefs of the crown? If the latter only, then indeed this principle is the same with that considered in the text, and does not come up to the case; because in punishing the children they were more than deprived of these extraordinary blessings; positive evils were inflicted upon them, *if they lived to bear the iniquity of their fathers.* [Lament. v. v. 7.] But if their life was taken away as the punishment of their parents crimes, then they lost what was not held under the extraordinary providence, like a fief of the crown in our Gothic

When the punishment of the state had involved the innocent in the public calamity; or when the innocent bore the iniquity of their wicked parents;

Gothic constitutions, but what was one of the common benefits granted alike, by the author of our being, to all mankind. But were those blessings, which God bestows upon all his creatures, which by the original compact between him and the Israelites should be forfieted in case they were guilty of treason, both by him who committed the crime, and by his children too, though they were innocent? This, I think, can scarce be imagined: for (if no future state was promised) this supposition contradicts the genius of the law, which represents it as always in a man's own power to chuse whether he will obtain the blessings of the covenant and avoid the curses of it; whereas this supposition makes as much, or more, depend upon the behaviour of a man's parents as upon his own. And thus the people of God, by being under the protection of his extraordinary providence, were in a much worse condition than the rest of the world: the virtuous man in any other situation might be happy; but the virtuous Israelite, if his father only had been wicked, must be miserable. For granting all the blessings of this world and even life itself, I mean the present life, to become forfeit by the original compact, so as to be wholly lost both to the offender and to his posterity, for the crime of lese majesty; yet this principle is not applicable here; and something more than it's being in the compact at the first entrance into society seems requisite to vindicate the justice of such a dispensation. The principle is not applicable; because not only the crime of idolatry, which is properly that of treason, where God is the civil governour, but many other crimes were punished upon the children of those, who committed them. The declaration in the second commandment is a general one, and sets forth, not what God would do to those who were guilty of idolatry, but what he does in all instances whatever. *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.* For though the place, where it stands, has connected it with the prohibition of idolatry, yet the words of it are such as will take in all other cases. And the instances of Achan's family. [Josh. vii. v. 15. 24. 25.] and of David's child [2 Sam. xii. v. 14.] plainly prove that the penalty due to the father's offences was executed upon the posterity in other instances besides that

yet God did not fail in his promises of giving them life and blessings, if the law by these promises had opened to their view the prospect of

that of treason against God: for I suppose that every breach of the laws or commands of a civil governour is not properly treason. Mr. Warburton himself seems to apprehend that something else is requisite to make this punishment just, besides it's being in the compact upon man's free entrance into society: why else should he consider it as a compact of a peculiar sort, by which the blessings they enjoyed were held, under an extraordinary providence, like fiefs of the crown? why else should he go on to inform the reader, that the execution of this punishment was reserved to God himself, and that *the magistrate was forbid to imitate this method of punishing, because a power less than omniscient could in all cases keep clear of injustice in such an administration?* [V. II. pag. 456.] For could any thing less than Omniscience, in all cases keep clear of injustice in punishing the criminal himself? if not, then why was the magistrate allowed to do this, since the same reason subsists here? and if the reason was of weight enough to forbid him punishing the posterity; it would have had the same weight in preventing him from punishing those who committed the crime. But if less than Omniscience might keep clear of injustice in punishing the offender in his own person, and nothing more was requisite to make the punishment of the children just, where the parents had offended, than it's being in the original compact; then the magistrate might have been allowed to imitate this method of punishment, with as little danger of acting unjustly in punishing the children of wicked parents, as in punishing those parents themselves. If indeed the consent of the children to the iniquities of their parents, or if their approbation at least, had been requisite, then as these might frequently be tacit, nothing less than Omniscience could have kept clear of injustice in using this method of punishment; and though this is making something else necessary to vindicate this dispensation, besides the compact at entering into society, yet Mr. Warburton seems to intimate that this was the case: [pag. 456.] but however he does not insist upon it; he owns [pag. 457.] that the facts are against the supposition, and that *doubtless an innocent posterity was sometimes punished, according to the denunciation of this law, for the crimes of their wicked fathers.*

another world: and they in the mean time would have no reason to complain against the justice of God for making them miserable here, as it was done in consequence of sanctions that were designed to preserve the observance of a law, from which they had the hopes of being made immortal and happy hereafter. And since the Israelites must have understood, that the rewards and punishments proposed in the law belonged to particular persons as well as to the public; since they saw, that, unless there was a future state, the several parts of this dispensation would clash with each other, and the sanctions be frequently inconsistent and sometimes unjust; and since they were persuaded, that the law was of divine original, and that nothing, which comes from God, can be charged with these imperfections; it would be natural for them to conclude, that the life and blessings, which the law had promised, were in part to be referred to a world to come.

This conclusion of theirs would be farther confirmed by observing, that the penalty threatened to some crimes did not only regard particulars, but was such too, as could not be inflicted in the present life, and therefore would be unintelligible, if there was no future one. The words of the law are these: *Whosoever he be of the children of Israel,* Lev. xx. v. 2
or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that giveth any of his seed unto Molech, he shall surely be put to

to death: the people of the land shall stone him with stones, and I (the Lord) *will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people: because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, to defile my sanctuary, and to profane my holy name. And if the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, and kill him not; then I will set my face against that man, and against his family, and will cut him off and all that go a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people.* But how are we to understand this penalty?—The people of the land were to stone him to death, who offered any of his seed unto Molech, and then God was to cut him off from among his people.—God's cutting him off from among his people cannot mean, that he should die an immature death by the special guidance and direction of providence: for when the punishment enjoyned by the law was regularly inflicted, this would always prevent the hand of God. Nor can it mean, that God would make use of the people as his instrument and take care, by appointment of law, that he, who had been guilty of this detested idolatry should be put to death: for God, we find, threatens, that, if the people neglected to stone him, yet he should not escape with impunity; still, says he, I will set my face against that man and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go

a whoring after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people. *Cutting off from among his or their people* is the same expression in both places, and must have the same signification in both: but in the latter place it cannot signify, that the criminal should die by the hand of man; and in the former it cannot signify, either that he should suffer any punishment in this world, since his being stoned to death would prevent any farther punishment here, or that he should die by the hand of God. The only sense, in which the penalty can be understood, is, that there was an inheritance, which God designed to bestow upon his people in another life, from which all, who committed the crime here described, should be finally excluded; and whilst they, who kept the law, should *sit down with Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob*, they, who kept it not, should *be cast out into outer darkness.*[n]

Whether the Israelites attended to these hopes, is another question: they might have sufficient

[n] Where the punishment took in, not only the criminal, but his family too, we see, in this instance, what parts of his family were to suffer, if it was final. God would set his face against the man and against his family, and would cut off him and *all that imitated his example*: a limitation, which was neither expressed in words nor obtained in fact, where the posterity suffered temporal punishment for the offences of their wicked parent. In this life the innocent were punished with the guilty, in the next those only were to suffer, who were concerned in the crime.

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notices, given them of future rewards and punishments, and yet regard nothing but the present life and the temporal advantages, which were promised to those, who should obey the law. This was at last most remarkably the case of the whole sect of the Sadducees. In the time of our Saviour the Jews were certainly acquainted with the doctrine of a future state; and the extraordinary providence, which was administered before the captivity, had then entirely ceased: so that whoever would adhere to their law must depend either upon the hopes of a life to come, or else upon those of a present reward, which every day's experience would shew to be uncertain and groundless. Yet in these circumstances we find the Sadducees tenacious of the law, more so indeed than ever the Israelites were before the captivity; though they denied even the possibility of a future existence and had no expectations but of present blessings. And if their mind could be so taken up with promises of temporal happiness, at a time when those promises were not made good, as to neglect the doctrine of a future state; though we are sure it was then known and cultivated by the rest of their brethren; why might not it be known in the first ages of the law, though it should appear, that the Israelites, wholly taken up not only with past promises but with the actual enjoyment of tem-

temporal happiness, did not attend much to it or make it the ground of their obedience?

In the interval between the giving of the law and the return from the captivity there are many plain intimations that the Israelites were acquainted with the doctrine of a future state. The law, which forbids necromancy cannot be alledged as a proof, that the soul survives the body; but this we may be sure of, that the practice of consulting with the dead about future events and about the conduct of our own lives, cannot possibly prevail, unless where the doctrine of the soul's future existence is known and received. And we find that necromancy was very general in the days of Saul, till he had put away the wizards and the consulters with familiar spirits. These people are indeed not called necromancers in this part of the sacred history: but that they, who consulted with familiar spirits, pretended to consult with the dead, at least that one of them did pretend to this, is plain from the account of what passed between Saul and the woman at Endor. Whether that, which appeared, was the real Samuel, or an evil spirit in his shape, or whether the whole was a cheat of the woman's, is not material to be determined; since the story itself shews what was the opinion of Saul; and the manner, in which it is told by the historian, as well as the prevalency of necromancy in those days, is a clear proof that the Israe-

Duter XVIII. v. 11

1 Samuel XXVIII

1 Samuel XXVIII. v 8 11. 12.

Israelites, wherever they had their information, did at that time know something of the doctrine of a future state. Their abusing this knowledge to support a practice, which the law had forbidden, is no reason for concluding that they had not derived it from the law, any more than their abusing the brazen serpent to a purpose expressly forbidden in the law will prove that they had not received from the books of Moses their account of those benefits, which were, according to God's appointment, conveyed to their fathers by that serpent. 2 King. XVIII. v. 4. Exod. XX. v. 4. 5. Numb. XXI.

David does not speak in the sixteenth psalm like one, who was ignorant of either a future state or the doctrine of redemption, where he says; *I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved: therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoyceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope: for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption: thou shalt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.* If these words may be understood either of a redeemer, a resurrection, and a future life; or of David's assurance that God would not suffer him to fall immaturely, and of the high pleasure, as well as security which there is in walking according to the law of God; I know how they ought to be understood: if the v. 8. 9. 10. 11. Warburton V. II. p. 564.

words

words themselves are equally capable of either sense, St. Peter has determined which is the true
Acts. II. v. 29. one. *Men and brethren; let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day; therefore being a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ, to sit on his throne: he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.* Other prophetical passages there may be, which are applicable to Christ only in their spiritual meaning, and which in a primary sense were true of some other person: but this cannot be the case of the passage before us; for St. Peter does not apply it to Christ by an authoritative interpretation, but by proving, that it could not possibly be spoken originally of David: and his argument would have been inconclusive, if the words had been at first designed by the psalmist to relate in any sense to what did or might concern himself.

Warburton pag. 435. The prayer, which Solomon addressed to the God of Israel in the dedication of the temple, is looked upon as a comment on the sanctions of the law, as a petition for a continuance of the old covenant made by the ministry of Moses. In this light it may serve to teach us what those sanc-

sanctions were, or what in the days of Solomon they were esteemed to be. The part of it, which more especially relates to the present question, is thus expressed: *If there be dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting or mildew, locusts or caterpillars; if their enemies besiege them in the cities of their land; whatsoever sore, or whatsoever sickness there be: then what prayer or supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore, and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands in this house; then hear Thou from heaven, and forgive and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart Thou knowest. When Solomon had finished this prayer, he stood and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant.* From this declaration of Solomon it appears, that the dispensations of providence had constantly been as equal, from the time of giving the law, to the time, in which he lived, as Moses had promised they should be. And when the Lord appeared to Solomon and assured him, that He had heard his prayer and his supplication, this was engaging to make good all that he had prayed for and extended the same equal providence

2 Chron. VI. v. 28. &c.

2 Chron. VII. v. 1. &c.

1 Kings IX. v. 2. 3.

to the captivity. If therefore that prayer is a comment upon the Mosaic sanctions, and yet there are found in the history of the Israelites, before the captivity, manifest inequalities in the dispensation of good and evil, these cannot be accounted for by a gradual withdrawing of God's extraordinary providence over them, but must be consistent with the rewards and punishments promised in the law. And when God had engaged to render to every man according unto all his ways, and yet did not do so in this life; it was obvious to conclude that there is a life after this: and such a conclusion could not but be made by one, who, though he had been favoured with such a promise, still saw that in the present world there was *one event to the righteous and to the wicked.*

One would think that the author of the book of Ecclesiastes did not live under an extraordinary providence, so equally administered as constantly to dispense in this life rewards to those, who did well; and punishments to those, who did otherwise. His observation and experience had shewn him, *that there is a just man, that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man, that prolongeth his life in his wickedness*; *that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked, and again there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous.* It was not amongst his Pagan neighbours that he had

Ecclef VII. v. 15 VIII. v. 14.

Warburton V. II. p. 443.

had taken notice of this inequality; but in Judea itself amongst the people of God: *all things*, says he, *come alike to all*; *there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked*, *to the good and to the clean and to the unclean*, *to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not*. He is certainly here describing inequalities, which happened, not any where else, not amongst idolaters, but in that place where sacrificing was doing right, or where it was a part of the true religion. He expected indeed that these inequalities would be set right; and that *although a sinner do evil an hundred times*, *and his days be prolonged*, *yet surely*, says he, *I know*, *that it shall be well with them that fear God*, *which fear before him*. But when, or by whom was this to be brought about?—Not by the magistrate in a just execution of the law; for *he saw the place of judgment*, *that wickedness was there*, *and the place of righteousness*, *that iniquity was there*. It was God, by whom he expected to have all these difficulties adjusted; *he said in his* own *heart*, *God shall judge the righteous and the wicked*; and he advises others, when *they saw the oppression of the poor*, *and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province*, *not to marvel at the matter*; *for He*, *that is higher than the highest*, *regardeth it*, *and there be higher than they*. But could he, whose whole experience had shewn him, that all things come alike to all men, expect that the

Ecclef. ix. v. 2.
Ecclef. viii. v. 12.
Ecclef. iii. v. 16.
Ibid. v. 17.
Ecclef. v. v. 8.

Most High would correct these inequalities in the present state of things? must not he in the course of his life have seen the end of many just and of many unjust men? and if before their death one sort had been always rewarded, and the other always punished; could he have affirmed, *that no one can know either love or hatred by all that is before him*; that no one from any observations, which he might make, would be able to discern, who were the favourites of heaven, and who were not? And as he had not often seen the sanctions of temporal rewards and punishments take place, in regard to particulars, amongst all the instances of good and bad men, that had fallen under his notice; he could have no hopes of seeing a more equal providence restored, in order to clear up these difficulties. Nay, he declares, that he did not expect to see them cleared up in this present life: for *when he considered all the oppressions, that are done under the sun, when he saw the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter, and on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter*; these inequalities gave him reason to *praise the dead, which are already dead, more than the living, which are yet alive.* This must have been a very odd declaration for one, who lived under a dispensation, where length of days was the principal reward of virtue, and where present misery was all the punishment, which vice had

Eccles. IX. v. 1.

Eccles. IV. v. 1.

Ibid. v. 2.

had to fear. Such a declaration could scarce have been made, if he expected to see the inequalities, that he so much complained of, adjusted in this life: and yet, we find, he was persuaded that they would be adjusted somewhere; and therefore he must know that death is not the end of our existence, but that God intended to call mankind to judgment in another world, and to pass sentence upon them, according to what they have done in this. Had he believed, that nothing but temporal rewards were promised to those, who should keep the commandments of God; as his extensive and continued experience had taught him, that in the generality of instances no such promises were made good; he must have concluded, that it was quite indifferent, whether God was obeyed or no, as to any thing that would happen to a man in consequence of his behaviour. But instead of this, from his experience of the vanity of this world, joined to his assurance that God would fulfil his promises, he concludes upon the whole; *fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole of man; because God will bring every work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil*[o]. Eccles. xii. v. 13. 14

· When Solomon says that *the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten*; [Ec-

The authority of Christ and his Apostles has confirmed this interpretation of the legal sanctions. Luke x. v. 25. &c. When our blessed Saviour was asked by the lawyer what he should do to inherit eternal life, he sends him to the law; *what*, says he, *is written in the law? how readest thou? and he answering said, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.* These words of Christ are very near the same with those, in which the Mosaic sanction was expressed; and as they are an answer to the lawyer's question,—*what he should do to inherit eternal life*,—they are certainly to be explained by that question; and therefore *to live* must in this place mean *to live eternally*. It is very unlikely, that Christ should intend to add fresh strength to the Mosaic covenant, and to support the expiring law by a new

[Eccles. ix. v. 5.] I understand him much in the same sense as I do Teucer in the Ajax of Sophocles,

> Φεῦ, τοῦ θανόντος ὡς ταχεῖά τις βροτοῖς
> Χάρις διαῤῥεῖ, καὶ προδοῦσ' ἁλίσκεται.

And thus he seems to explain himself in the words, which immediately follow; *and their love and their hatred and their envy is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing, that is done under the sun.* [v. 6.] This limits all, that had been said before. to *the portion of a man in this life*, after he himself is gone out of it.

san-

sanction, and a more valuable one too than any, or than all of those, with which it was originally enforced. And it is certain that the promise of life, which is here made, does not belong to the Gospel covenant; for the terms of it are the very same
with those of the law, *the man that doth them shall live in them*; the promises of Christianity are made upon a very different condition, they offer life *to every one that believeth*; *for the just shall live by faith*. Nor could this be a sanction, which had been added by the prophets, who lived after the times of Moses, since the law neither wanted any such nor would admit of any: the lawgiver himself had both declared, that what he had promised was sufficient to enforce obedience, and had most solemnly forbidden the least addition to be made to the written institution.

Gal. III. v. 12.
Rom. I. v. 16. III. v. 26. IV. v. 5. Gal. III. v. 11.
Deuteron. XXX. v. 15. &c.
Deuteron. IV. v. 2.

The later Jews might, notwithstanding this, have altered the sanction, as they made void the precepts, by their own traditions: but had this tradition been, like the rest, had it been one that was raised without any good grounds, and supported by no authority from the word of God; Christ would not have accused those, who denied a resurrection, of erring, for want of knowing the scriptures and the power of God: they could not possibly have been charged with this; unless the scriptures had contained what those, who were

Matt. XXII. v. 29.

dili-

diligent in [p] *searching them, expected* to find there, *the promises of eternal life*: he would not have

[p] The passage here alluded to is in the original, [Joh. v. v. 39. 40.] ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφὰς, ὅτι ὑμεῖς δοκεῖτε ἐν αὐταῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔχειν, καὶ ἐκεῖναί εἰσιν αἱ μαρτυροῦσαι περὶ ἐμοῦ· καὶ οὐ θέλετε ἐλθεῖν πρός με, ἵνα ζωὴν ἔχητε. Christ seems to speak of it as a strange thing that they thought they had the *promises* of eternal life in the scriptures, and not come to him, when those very scriptures gave testimony of him: but it would have been no strange thing at all, if they had never searched the scriptures; Christ might be pointed out there, and yet they not come to him, if they had not been conversant in those books: therefore as translating the word ἐρευνᾶτε imperatively, *search the scriptures*, supposes them not used to search there before, and so will make this passage confused and little to the purpose, what if we should translate it indicatively? *ye search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*

I fancy there are some other passages in the scriptures, where the same mistake has left an obscurity, that may be cleared up only by altering the translation. [Rom. xiii. v. 8.] Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε, which we render *owe no man any thing*, had better have been rendered *ye owe no man any thing*: for then it would have fallen in exactly with the Apostle's reasoning in this place, which is designed to shew, that the evangelical precept of charity, when rightly complyed with, contains the whole law, and is the sum of whatever we can be obliged to in our dealings with each other.

They are surely in the right, who translate the word καθίζετε in the following passage [1 Cor. vi. v. 4.] indicatively and with an interrogation. Τολμᾷ τις ὑμῶν πρᾶγμα ἔχων πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον κρίνεσθαι ἐπὶ τῶν ἀδίκων, καὶ οὐχὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἁγίων; οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ ἅγιοι τὸν κόσμον κρινοῦσι; καὶ εἰ ἐν ὑμῖν κρίνεται ὁ κόσμος, ἀνάξιοί ἐστε κριτηρίων ἐλαχίστων; οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ἀγγέλους κρινοῦμεν; μήτι γε βιωτικά; βιωτικὰ μὲν οὖν κριτήρια ἐὰν ἔχητε, τοὺς ἐξουθενημένους ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, τούτους καθίζετε. This whole passage I would translate; *dare any of you having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? do ye not know, that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? know ye not, that we shall judge angels? how much more things, that pertain unto this life? if then ye have judgment of things pertaining to this life,* do ye set them

to

referred this enquirer to the law for a promise, which appeared no where, but in their own tra-

to judge, *who are despised in the church?* this construction makes the passage uniform and intelligible, and connects it, at least, as well with what follows, as the common one does; *I speak to your shame, is it that there is not a wise man amongst you, no not one, that shall be able to judge between his brethren? but brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.* The unbelievers are those, who are *despised in the church*, of whom the church makes no account: if any one thinks this too hard an appellation, and such as the Apostle is not used to give to the heathens, he may be satisfied by looking back to the first verse of the chapter, where he will find them called *the unjust*. The words ἐξουδενέω and ἐξουθενέω are of the same signification in the Hellenistical writers: the LXX translate the word בזה sometimes by one of them and sometimes by the other; and Psal. LXXIII. v. 20. we find ἐξουδενέω used in exactly the same sense, in which I have here translated ἐξουθενέω, ἐν τῇ πόλει σου τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτῶν ἐξουδενώσεις.

Our Saviour says, [Matth. XXIII. v. 2.] *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat, all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do,* [τηρεῖτε καὶ ποιεῖτε] *but do not ye* [μὴ ποιεῖτε] *after their works.* But could Christ, who bids his disciples beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees, [Matt. XVI. v. 12.] ever be supposed to direct the multitude to do what they commanded? could he, who charged the Pharisees [Matt. XV. v. 6.] with making void the precepts of God by their traditions, think of bidding his hearers observe what they ordered? could he, who immediately afterwards [XXIII. v. 16. 17. 18.] called these Scribes and Pharisees blind guides (not only for the example which they set, but for the doctrine which they taught) order those, who came to be instructed by him, to commit themselves to the direction of such guides? surely there is more reason for thinking, that he spoke to them in this manner; *the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe that ye observe and do; but do not ye after their works.* The word ποιεῖτε in the former part of the sentence should be translated indicatively, and in the latter imperatively. Though the authority of the Scribes and Pharisees is such, that it dazzles you, and makes you pay obedience to their commands; yet you cannot be deceived by their example; do not imitate their works, for you will see by these how little they are to be depended upon, since they say and do not.

ditions: and he, who was upon all occasions so bitter against their *unwarranted* traditions, would not have countenanced this, if it had been false; especially since it was such an one, as, we find, did
Warburton. V. II. p. 581. 582. afterwards greatly obstruct the reception of true Christianity. If therefore the Jewish traditio[n] had interpreted the promises of the law in [this] sense, we may venture to follow that interpretation, and to affirm, that the law did promise eternal life, not merely because the Jews thought so, but because the most authentic interpreter of that law confirmed their opinion.

St. Paul, in his epistles, speaks the language of
Rom. VII. v. 10. his Master, *that the law was ordained to life*; and

Warburton. V. II. p. 581.

I know not whether a difficult passage in the book of Job [II. v. 9.] may not be cleared up by such a change in the construction of it. *Then said his wife unto him, dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God and die:* the original is בָּרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים וָמֻת by changing the points, which may be done without any scruple, we might change these imperative verbs of the conjugation pihel into the participles benoni of kal, and read it בֹּרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים וָמֵת [or indeed בָּרֵךְ is itself the benoni of kal, though this form is less used than the other.] If then we understand this to be spoken interrogatively we might translate it, *does he that blesses or that worships God even die?* Job's wife reproached him just in the same manner that his friends did afterwards, and put the same unkind construction upon his sufferings: she supposed it impossible for those, who obey God to be miserable; and therefore when she saw the calamity of her husband, she concluded, that, notwithstanding his fair appearance, he must have been a sinner: *dost thou still*, says she, *retain thine integrity?* which I understand to be, not an exhortation to give up his integrity, but a doubt whether he had not parted with it already. Is it possible that you, who suffer so much, should have retained your integrity? God is always more kind

that the life, which it offered, was the same with what was offered by the Gospel: for he makes no other difference between the two promises, but only in the conditions of obtaining what was offered by them: *the just shall live* he understands a promise of the same import in both covenants; by the means of obtaining the character of *just* was not the same in both; under the Mosaic dispensation, it belonged to those, *who kept the righteousness of the law*; under the Gospel, to those, *who submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ*; the former says, *the man that doth them shall live in them*, the latter says, *the just shall live by faith.*

Rom. II. v. 26. X. v. 5.
Rom. X. v. 3.
Gal. III. v. 12.
Ibid. v. 11.

kind to his servants; are not those, who are pure from iniquity, under his protection? does he, who blesses or who worships God perish? Job's reply to this is very pertinent, *thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh: what? shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?* are you so weak, or so little acquainted with the ways of providence, as to imagine, that God sends nothing but good to those who serve him? are not his dispensations more mixed, and ought not we to be contented though they are so? shall we receive good only, and shall we not receive evil?—Every body knows, that בֵּרֵךְ more frequently signifies *to bless* than *to curse*: and I understand בֵּרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים *he that blesses God* to mean *he that worships God*, because I find that [Isa. LXVI. v. 3.] מְבָרֵךְ אָוֶן means *worshipping* an idol. A construction not unlike what I have given to this passage, and a similar use of the particle ו may be met with [Malach. III. v. 15.] גַּם בָּחֲנוּ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּמָּלֵטוּ *yea they who tempt God are even delivered.* Or if we make וָמֵת the praeter tense of kal with the conversive ו there is a passage [Deut. v. v. 22.] where the construction is still more like this אִם־יֹסְפִים אֲנַחְנוּ לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶת־קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹד וָמָתְנוּ *if we hear any more the voice of the Lord our God, then we shall die.*

 What

What could have persuaded the Apostle to make this concession and to reason from it, unless it had been true?—sure he would not have made it upon any consideration, if it had been attended with a consequence so fatal to Christianity as some have imagined: he would not have allowed the truth of an opinion merely Jewish, and with foundation, *that they had eternal life in their scriptures*, if from thence it would necessarily follow, that the mission of Jesus was entirely vain, as being superseded by that of Moses. Or, if Moses taught not a future state, had it been an unavoidable consequence, that his religion can only be preparative to that of Jesus, which did; and so the total abolition of Judaism must necessarily have followed upon the preaching of the Gospel; it is scarce to be imagined, that when the Apostle was endeavouring to convince the persons, to whom he wrote, of the law's being abrogated, he should comply with a fond notion of the Jews, and grant that Moses had taught a future state: nothing sure but the truth of this opinion could have prevailed with him to allow it, when by doing so he was forced to use an indirect method of proving what would have been obvious to the meanest capacities, if he had done otherwise. This conduct of his could not be owing to any fear of shocking an universal tradition supported by a national belief; unless the tradition was true, and the belief well ground-

Warburton V. II. p.578.

Warburton V. II. p.478.

Warburton V. II. p.582.

grounded: for we find that no reverence, either to the antiquity, or to the general reception of an opinion, could prevent him from opposing it, if it was false. He, who was not afraid of contradicting an universal tradition, that mankind could be justified by the works of the law; he who against the authority of a national belief, affirms that the obligation of the law was void by the coming of Christ, cannot be supposed to have been tender of denying, that the law promised a future state, only because the Jews thought otherwise.

Thus we have seen from the connection between the law of Moses and the Abrahamic covenant, from the nature of the legal sanctions, and from the authority of Christ and his Apostles, that obedience to the will of God was enforced by the promises of a future life, and that mankind were taught to look for their ultimate happiness in a world to come, whilst the Mosaic dispensation continued.

CHAP. XIII.

Christianity completes the patriarchal religion; and promises the happiness of another life, upon easier conditions than the law of Moses had promised it.

DUring a great part of the interval between Moses and Christ, the Jews were favoured with a succession of prophets. But I do not consider this as a distinct period of revelation; because their office related partly to the law, which was already given, and partly to the Gospel, which was to be published afterwards. In respect of the law, those inspired teachers were to inculcate it's precepts and to explain it's sanctions; in respect of the Gospel, they were to do what the law itself had in some sort done before, they were to keep up in the minds of their countrymen the expectations of a future redeemer, and were to prepare them for his reception, whenever he should appear amongst them.

Christianity is the last revelation of God's will to mankind; and in this He has completed the gracious design, which was begun in the patriarchal dispensation and was carried on under the law. Our first parents were favoured with a very early notice, that God would be reconciled after the fall, and would restore to them and to their post-

See pag. 287.

poſterity the happineſs and immortality, which had been forfeited by their diſobedience. It did not appear to them, when, or by whom this reconciliation was to be brought about: the ſupport of their obedience was a general promiſe of victory over the ſerpent, in which were included the hopes of recovering what had been loſt by his victory over them; and the will of God, as far as they could diſcover it, was the rule of their behaviour.

Sherlock on prophecy. pag. 74.

In this general promiſe of recovering eternal happineſs all the deſcendants of Adam were equally concerned. But ſome particular aſſurances of this ſort ſeem to have been given to the family of Seth: and Abraham was afterwards choſen out of this family to receive the promiſed bleſſings, which were in his ſeed to be conveyed to the reſt of mankind. So that Chriſtianity is plainly the end and perfection of the patriarchal diſpenſation: for to Abraham it was promiſed, *that all the families of the earth ſhould be bleſſed in his ſeed*; and, in conſequence of this prophecy, St. Peter aſſured the Jews, that *God had ſent Chriſt to bleſs them*; and St. Paul aſſured the Gentiles, that one end of Chriſt's coming was, *that the bleſſing of Abraham might come on them alſo*. This was what their Lord had expreſsly given in commiſſion, after he was riſen from the dead; for he commanded his diſciples *to teach all nations*, to promiſe remiſſion of

See pag. 295.

See pag. 303. 306. 307.

Gen. XXII. v. 18.

Acts III. v. [illegible]

Gal. III. v. 14.

Matt XXVIII. v. 19. Mar. XVI. v. 16.

sins to those, who should believe in Him, and to make an offer of eternal happiness to as many
Rom. II. v. 7. as *by patient continuance in well-doing, would seek for glory, and honour, and immortality.*

In the law of Moses, besides the promise of temporal blessings, some offers were made of a future reward; but they were made in such a manner, and upon such conditions, as still to carry on the same designs of providence, that had already been opened to the Patriarchs: for as *God*
Gal. III. v. 8. 24. *had preached before the Gospel unto Abraham*; so *the law was a school-master to bring the Israelites to Christ.*

It was necessary that a people, which was cho-
Warburton V. II. p. 361. sen to bring about the future designs of heaven, and to preserve the true religion, should be marked out and distinguished from the idolatrous world by some visible instances of God's favour: this was undoubtedly one reason for making temporal blessings a part of the Mosaic sanctions. And indeed the nature of the law itself required that it should be thus established: for there were several precepts in it, which none but a people under the more immediate care and protection of
Exod. XXXIV. v. 23. 24. God, could possibly have complied with. All their males could not have attended the stated worship at Jerusalem three times in a year; unless He, who commanded this service, had defended their wives and families by His providence, and had taken

taken care that *no man should desire their land, when they went up to appear before Him.* The law Levit. xxv. v. 4. 5. 20. 21. directed, that *the seventh year should be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord, in which they should neither sow their field nor prune their vineyard:* they were forbidden either *to reap, in this year of rest, that which grew of itself, or to gather the grapes of their vine undressed.* It would be natural for the Israelites upon hearing these precepts, to ask; —*what shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our encrease!* and there would have been no way of making this part of their duty appear practicable; if *God*, who enjoined it, had not at the same time promised to *command his blessing upon them in the sixth year, that their land might bring forth fruit for three years.* And lastly, though See pag. 305. a peaceful settlement and a prosperous condition in the land of Canaan has been shewn not to be the whole of what God had promised to the chosen branch of Abraham's family; yet as these blessings were principal parts of the covenant, they must necessarily be included in the legal sanctions: See pag. 321. because the patriarchal covenant and the law of Moses were inseparably connected with each other by God himself, who was the Author of them both.

Ibid. But we should always remember, that the religion of Moses was connected with the spiritual as well as with the temporal part of the former covenant. *The commandment*, as the Apostle affirms, *was ordained to life, and was holy, just, and good.* The rule of behaviour, which this institution prescribed, was agreeable to the nature of it's Author; and they, to whom it was given, had the promise of an inheritance in a world to come confirmed to them by it's sanctions. Yet this dispensation, though perfect in itself, was *weak through the flesh:* it taught men what they were to do, but then left them to try their own abilities; without affording them any helps against their frailties and vicious inclinations: it promised, that they, who obeyed it's precepts, should live by them, but required an exact compliance with them all, and made death the penalty for every transgression. Had *this first covenant* been imperfect in it's precepts, or had it wanted a sufficient sanction, it would have been unworthy of God; and yet, *had it been wholly faultless, then should no place have been sought for a second:* upon the former supposition, it could not have prepared the way for any true religion; and upon the latter, it would have made all future revelations needless.

Rom. VII. v. 10. 12.

Rom. VIII. v. 3. Locke's comment on Rom. VIII. v. 3.

Heb. VIII. v. 7.

Heb. VII. v. 18. The weakness and unprofitableness of the law was a sufficient reason for repealing it after Christ had

had taught an easier way to obtain eternal life: but yet, whilst this dispensation lasted, those qualities served and were purposely designed to shew the Israelites that they had as much occasion for the Gospel as the Gentiles had. They, who had no other guide but their own reason, could indeed have little assurance that eternal happiness in another life will be the reward of the good, which they have done in this: but they, who lived under the Mosaic dispensation, being unable to attain to such righteousness as their religion required, would find *the law to be unto death, which was* by the Author of it *ordained to life.* Rom. VII. v. 10.

From hence it appears, that the law was weak, not because either the rule of behaviour contained in it, or the sanctions, upon which it was established, were imperfect, but because they were weak, to whom it was given: it was unprofitable, not because it made no promises of a future reward, but because, through the infirmities of the flesh, they, to whom these promises were made, could not comply with the conditions so as to receive the benefit of them; unless they looked forward to a future dispensation; unless they trusted in a Saviour, who should deliver them from the curse Gal. III. v. 13. of the law, even in Him, who has been in all Artic. of relig. VII. ages of the world the only Mediator between God and man.

In short; God designed that the religion of Moses should not interrupt the hopes, which he had given to Abraham, and that it should make the Israelites sensible of their weakness, and bring them to Christ. For these reasons it was necessary, that eternal life should be a part of it's sanction, but that they, who lived under it, should have no helps afforded them against their frailties, and that the conditions of obtaining what it promised should be such, as might constantly inculcate the want of a Redeemer. (Warburton V. II. p. 472.) And thus the *first covenant by making nothing perfect was the introduction of a better hope*: and led them, who were under it, to *a second, which is established upon better promises.*

(Warburton V. II. p. 473.) From this view of the nature and design of the law, we may understand, why the hopes and promises of the second covenant are said to be better than those of the first: it is not because the Gospel offered a more excellent reward than the law had done, but because the conditions of obtaining the same reward were much easier under the Christian dispensation than they had been under the Mosaic one. This is the only difference which appears in S. Paul's representation of the matter; — (Gal. III. v. 11. 12.) The law says, *this do and thou shalt live*; — The Gospel says, *the just shall live by faith.* Nor is there any other difference taken notice of in a well-known passage of the epistle to the Hebrews,

to

to which I have before had occasion to refer the reader. Christ *hath obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second: for finding fault with them he saith; behold the days come (saith the Lord) when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant, that I made with their fathers in the day, when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant, that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws in their mind, and will write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest: for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.* The law had promised life upon the hard terms of an unsinning obedience, and had afforded men no assistances to bear them out in the discharge of the duties, which it enjoyned: the new covenant has Heb. VIII. v.6. &c.

pro-

provided against both these defects; for God has promised to write his laws in our hearts, and to be merciful to our iniquities. But when the same thing is promised upon very difficult conditions at first, and afterwards upon more easy ones, there is a plain reason, from this difference alone, for saying, that the latter promise is better than the former. And since St. Paul in comparing the promises of the law with those of the Gospel, has taken notice of no other difference, I see not what authority we have for concluding from his calling one a better dispensation than the other, that one of them offered only a temporal reward, but that the other assures us of everlasting happiness. Nay, there is great reason to believe, that if he had known of any such difference, he would not have omitted it, when his only design in comparing them together was to shew the superiour excellence of the Christian covenant.

The inflexible rigour of the law, by which, as it sentenced men to dye for every transgression, what was ordained to life was found to be unto death, has made St. Paul call it *the ministration of death* and *the ministration of condemnation.* And since the Gospel has abolished *the law of sin and death* by setting them free, who were under the curse of that law; since it affords all necessary assistance towards the discharge of our duty, and as-

2 Cor. III v. 7. &c

Warburton V. II. p. 471.

assures us, through faith in Christ, of the pardon of sin; the author of these gracious promises is fitly said to have [a] *abolished death and to have brought life and immortality to light.* 2 Tim. I. v. 1.

Thus at length *the day-spring from on high has visited* all mankind; *it has given light to the Gentiles, who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, and, by giving knowledge of salvation for the remission of sins, it has guided the feet of the Jews into the ways of peace.* This is the point, to which I designed to bring the reader. I have endeavoured to shew him, that the wants of nature and the Luke I. v. 7 &c. See chap. X.

[a] Mr. Warburton [V. II. pag. 471.] has explained this passage in a different manner. He concludes from these words of the Apostle, that life and immortality were kept hid and out of sight, till the preaching of the Gospel. The reader, after considering what has been said in the foregoing chapters, concerning the Mosaic and the patriarchal religion, must determine which is the true sense of the passage. Mr. Warburton adds, "for this reason we find that *life* "*and immortality*, which is here said to be *brought to light through* "*the Gospel*, is so often called the *mystery of the Gospel:* that is a "*mystery*, till this promulgation of it by the disciples of Christ, "*which had been hid from ages and from generations, but was then* "*made manifest unto his saints.*" [Ephes. VI. v. 16.] But if we compare this passage with another in the same epistle, [Ephes. III. v. 3. 5. 6.] we may see some reason for believing that the *mystery of the Gospel* does not mean the knowledge of a future life then first communicated to mankind, but the *calling of the Gentiles* in particular to be partakers of God's promises in Christ. *By revelation*, says St. Paul, *God made known unto me the mystery, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and prophets by the spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promises by Christ in the Gospel.*

imperfections of reason have made a revelation necessary, both to teach us how to make ourselves happy, and to oblige us to be virtuous; that God has taught mankind, in every age of the world, to expect their final good in another life, as the reward of their obedience to his will in this; and that the promises of all former revelations were so contrived as to make the Gospel necessary, and were all of them intended by their Author to lead us to Christ.

THE END.

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